

# Canons Ashby Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan



**Consultation  
Draft 2022**

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Appendix A: Designated Heritage Assets

## Introduction

### 1.1 Why has this document been produced?

West Northamptonshire Council is currently undertaking reviews of existing conservation areas within the Daventry area and assessing the designation of new conservation areas where appropriate. The Canons Ashby Conservation Area was designated in 1976 and last reviewed in 1997. This review provides an opportunity to set out the architectural and historic interest of the Canons Ashby Conservation Area, to aid the sensitive management of change with regard to the historic environment. Hence, this document has been produced to inform that review, and is published alongside the boundary of the conservation area.

A public online meeting was held on 18 November 2021 to inform this draft document. Advice on how to comment is set out in Section 1.4 below.

### 1.2 What status will this document have?

It is intended that, following consultation, this document will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document. As such it will be a material planning consideration in the determination of future planning decisions.

### 1.3 What is the purpose of this document?

Conservation area appraisals identify and describe the features which contribute to the special architectural or historic interest of a conservation area. As a Supplementary Planning Document, the appraisal is a 'material consideration' in the determination of planning decisions, and as such the information contained within the document should be used to manage change in a manner sensitive to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

A Management Plan for the conservation area has also been produced, which can be found at Section 11. The appraisal identifies both positive elements of the conservation area and those under threat. Recommendations have been provided in the Management Plan to address any specific issues identified in the appraisal and to guide the future management of the conservation area.

This appraisal has been produced in accordance with current guidance from Historic England *Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management 2019*, as well as national and local policy and legislation.

### 1.4 How do I comment on this document?

Any comments on this document or the proposed conservation area designation should be made in writing no later than \_\_\_\_\_ (late representations will not be accepted).

Comments can be made:

by completing a questionnaire which can be accessed via the website [West Northamptonshire Council Conservation Areas web page](#) ;

by email to [heritage.ddc@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:heritage.ddc@westnorthants.gov.uk);

by letter to Anna Wilson, Heritage Policy Assistant, West Northamptonshire Council, Lodge Road, Daventry, NN11 4FP.

### **1.5 How is this document structured?**

The appraisal begins with an introduction to conservation areas and background policy and legislation at Section 2. Details of the conservation area boundary can be found in Section 3, followed by details of the proposed boundary changes at 3.1. A Summary of Special Interest for the conservation area is set out in Section 4. Section 5 provides information on the location of the conservation area and its wider landscape context, whilst Section 6 contains a brief explanation of the historic development of the conservation area including historic mapping. A spatial analysis is set out in Section 7, including examination of the contribution of important green spaces, areas of archaeological potential, views and an open space analysis.

Following on from this, Section 8 provides details on local architectural styles, materials and building forms, including boundary treatments. Section 9 expands on this, setting out design guidelines within the conservation area.

Section 10 sets out opportunities to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, based on the findings of the review. This includes proposals for Article 4 Directions and proposed candidates for the Local List.

A Management Plan is set out in Section 11. This plan takes forward the findings of the appraisal and sets out threats and corresponding recommendations to aid future management of the conservation area.

Sources, further reading and information as well as copyright details can be found following the Management Plan.

A list of all designated heritage assets in the conservation area can be found at Appendix A.

### **1.6 Who is this document intended for?**

This document is intended for anyone with an interest in development which may affect the character or appearance of the Canons Ashby Conservation Area. This includes, but is not limited to, homeowners, developers, statutory undertakers, planning officers and inspectors.

# 1 Policy and Legislation

## 2.1 What is a conservation area?

A conservation area can be defined as an

**“...area of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.**

Section 69 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

These areas contain features and characteristics which make them unique, locally distinctive, historic places. Conservation areas can take many and varied forms; those in the Daventry area are largely centred on rural villages, but also include several historic parks, the Grand Union and Oxford Canals, Daventry Town Centre, and the Daventry Reservoir.

## 2.2 Why do we designate conservation areas?

Conservation areas protect our nation’s distinct, local heritage. West Northamptonshire Council has an obligation to assess and designate areas of special architectural or historic interest as conservation areas. In undertaking this duty, the council must then pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of designated conservation areas. The intention of conservation area designation is not to stop

development, but rather to manage change in a way which preserves rather than erodes the qualities which make it special.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2021, paragraph 190) also encourages West Northamptonshire Council to provide a positive strategy for conservation, allowing for,

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the wider social, cultural and economic benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- the opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

## 2.3 What does it mean to live and work in a conservation area?

Whilst living or working in a conservation area means some extra planning considerations, these exist to care for the historic or architectural features which contribute to a place’s special character. Conservation area controls are most likely to affect owners who wish to undertake works to the outside of their building or trees on their property.

## Demolition

If you wish to demolish a building within a conservation area you will need planning permission.

## Trees

If you wish to cut down, top or lop any tree over 75mm in diameter at 1.5m above ground, you must inform West Northamptonshire Council six weeks before work begins. This allows the authority to consider the contribution the tree makes to the character of the area and if necessary create a Tree Preservation Order to protect it.

## Other works

Some works within conservation areas require planning permission:

- Cladding the exterior of a house;
- Any side extensions or rear extensions of more than one storey;
- Alterations to roofs, including dormer windows;
- The installation of satellite dishes and antennae;
- Demolition or erection of walls, gates and fences over 1m in height adjacent to a public highway.

Some other minor works remain as 'permitted development' within conservation areas. Advice on Permitted Development can be sought from the council's Development Control department.

Where such changes would harm local character the council can introduce special controls, known as Article 4 directions, which

withdraw particular permitted development rights. The result is that planning permission is required for these changes.

West Northamptonshire Council is exploring the possible use of Article 4 Directions as part of this conservation area appraisals project. See Section 10.2 for more information.

If you are considering undertaking work to your property and are unsure about whether it requires permission, please contact West Northamptonshire Council at [planning.ddc@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:planning.ddc@westnorthants.gov.uk). Please note that works may also require Listed Building Consent.

## Energy Efficiency and Heritage

Improving energy efficiency forms part of the wider objective to achieve sustainable development, and most historic buildings can accommodate improvements when a good balance is struck between maximising energy benefits and minimising harm to the historic environment in accordance with current best conservation practice. Often small changes can make a difference.

Bear in mind that some alterations may require planning consent and works to listed buildings will require Listed Building Consent in most cases.

## 2.4 Further Information

Further information regarding conservation areas can be found on our website at [Conservation Areas - West Northamptonshire Council](#). For advice relating to development within conservation



areas, please contact the council's Development Management department via

Email: [planning.ddc@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:planning.ddc@westnorthants.gov.uk) or

Telephone: 0300 126 7000

Information and advice for those living and working within conservation areas can also be found on the Historic England website at:

[Living in a Conservation Area | Historic England](#)

If adopted, the conservation area appraisal and management plan will have the status of a Supplementary Planning Document.

### **3. Summary of Conservation Area Boundary (1997)**

The current conservation area boundary, reviewed in 1997, is shown in Figure 1.

Beginning in the lane that leads to Eydon, the boundary follows a fence on the southwest side of two large mill ponds in a north-westerly direction and then continues along the edge of a wooded area. Eventually the conservation area boundary turns northeast, east and then southeast, still following the boundary of the wood, enclosing it and four earthwork dams which are part of what would have been a series of five mill ponds. These features are also included within the Canons Ashby Registered Park and Garden and the Scheduled Monument designations.

The boundary then turns northeast once again and crosses the lane that runs towards Preston Capes. It continues in a straight line across the middle of an enclosed area of pasture until it meets the hedgerow boundary of that enclosure. Here it turns towards the southeast and follows a line parallel to the enclosure boundary but 27m to its north until it meets the hedgerow boundary of another enclosure. Here it turns northeast and follows that boundary, including the enclosure in the conservation area, until it reaches the lane to Adstone. After following the lane southwest for 106m, the boundary turns south along a hedge, including the field on its west side in the conservation area. The boundary turns east and then south to include an area containing medieval fishponds, the Church of St. Mary, The Woodyard and Hill View Cottages.

Crossing the road Banbury Road, the boundary then turns southwest and follows the field hedge towards South West Farm, including the field on its north side and the farmhouse in the conservation area. At the southeast end of the field the conservation area boundary turns north along a watercourse and meets the lane where it first began.

Within the boundary of the conservation area there are several designated heritage assets; Figure 2 shows the Grade II\* Registered Park and Garden of Canons Ashby House (National Heritage List for England NHLE ref 1000488), which includes the formal gardens and the parkland. This is now managed by the National Trust. Figure 3 shows the scheduled monument (NHLE ref 1015534) which includes the earthworks of the medieval shrunken settlement, the site of the priory and the fishpond dams; and Figure 4 shows listed buildings within the conservation area. Details of the various designations are also set out in Appendix A.

Figure 1: Map showing the current conservation area boundary (1997)

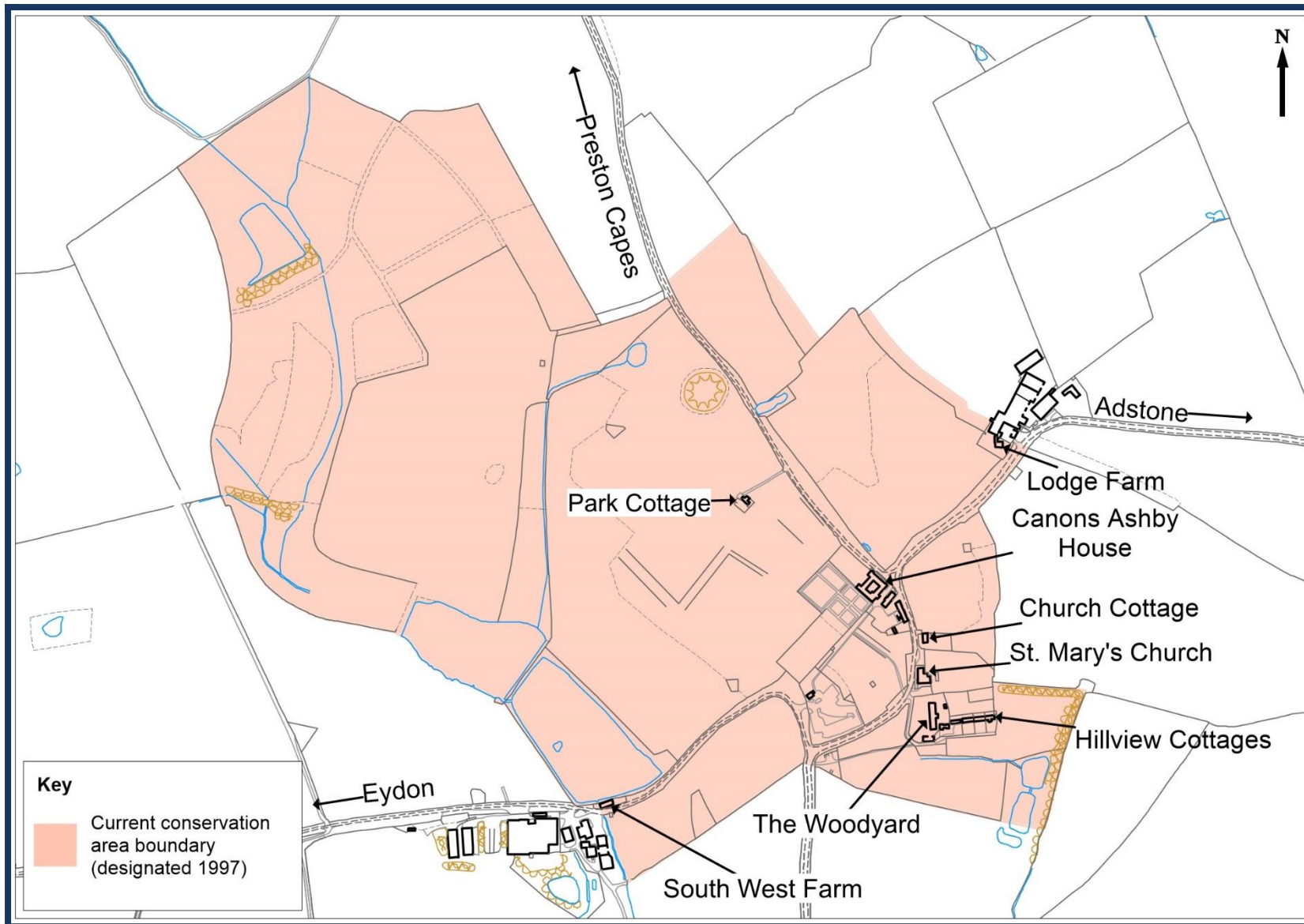


Figure 2: Map showing the current conservation area boundary (1997) and the registered park and garden designation

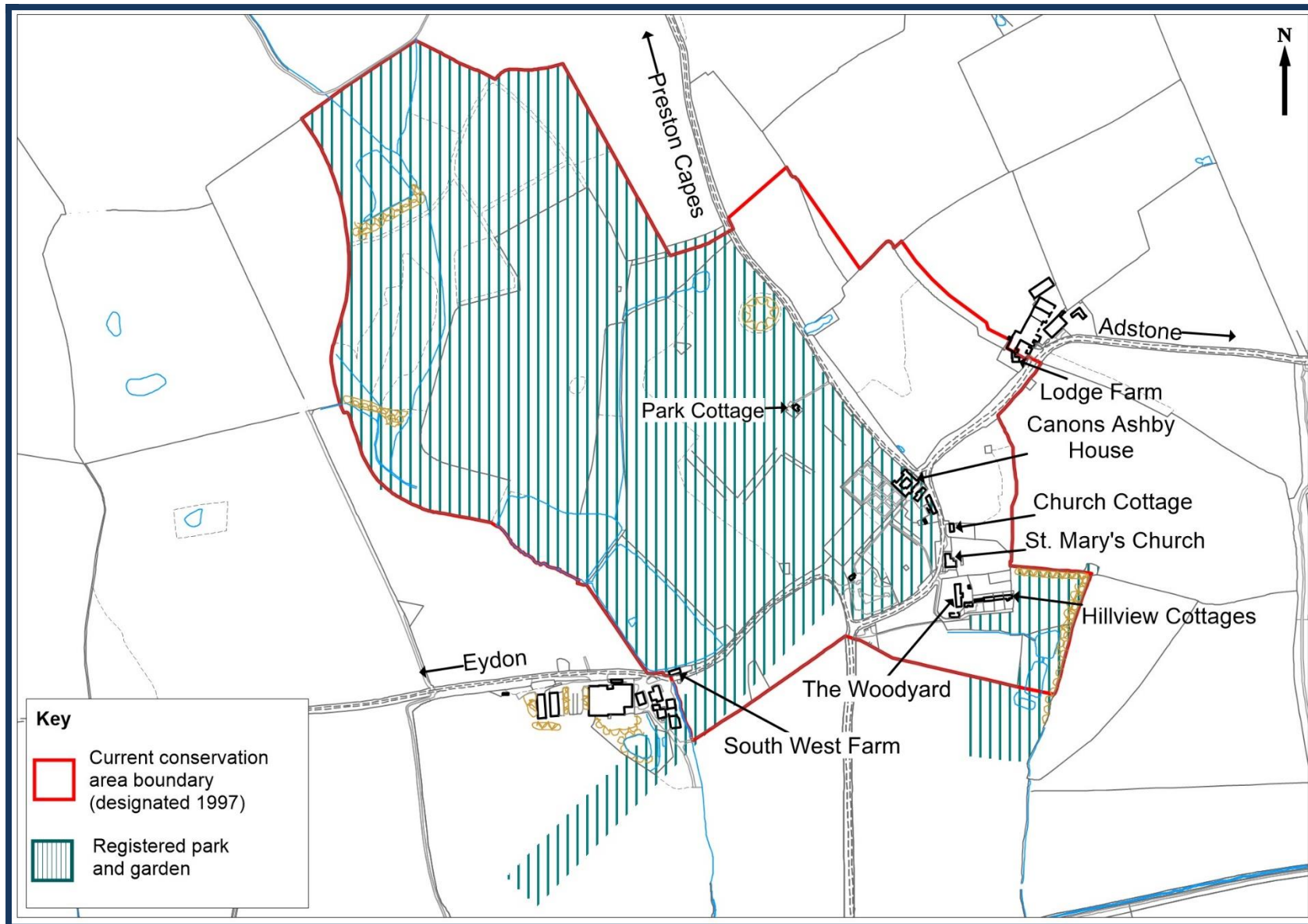


Figure 3: Map showing the current conservation area boundary (1997) and the area of the scheduled monument

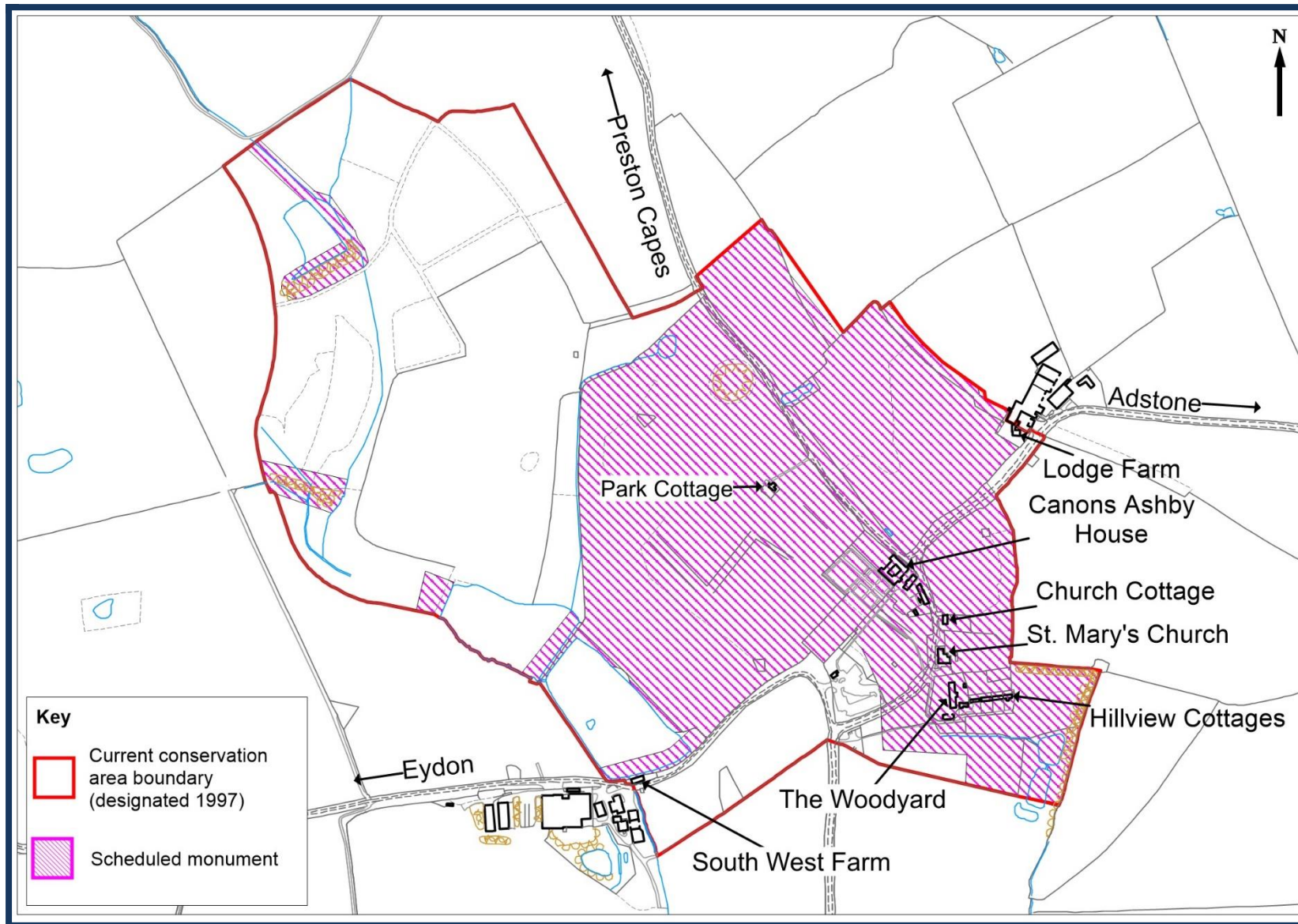
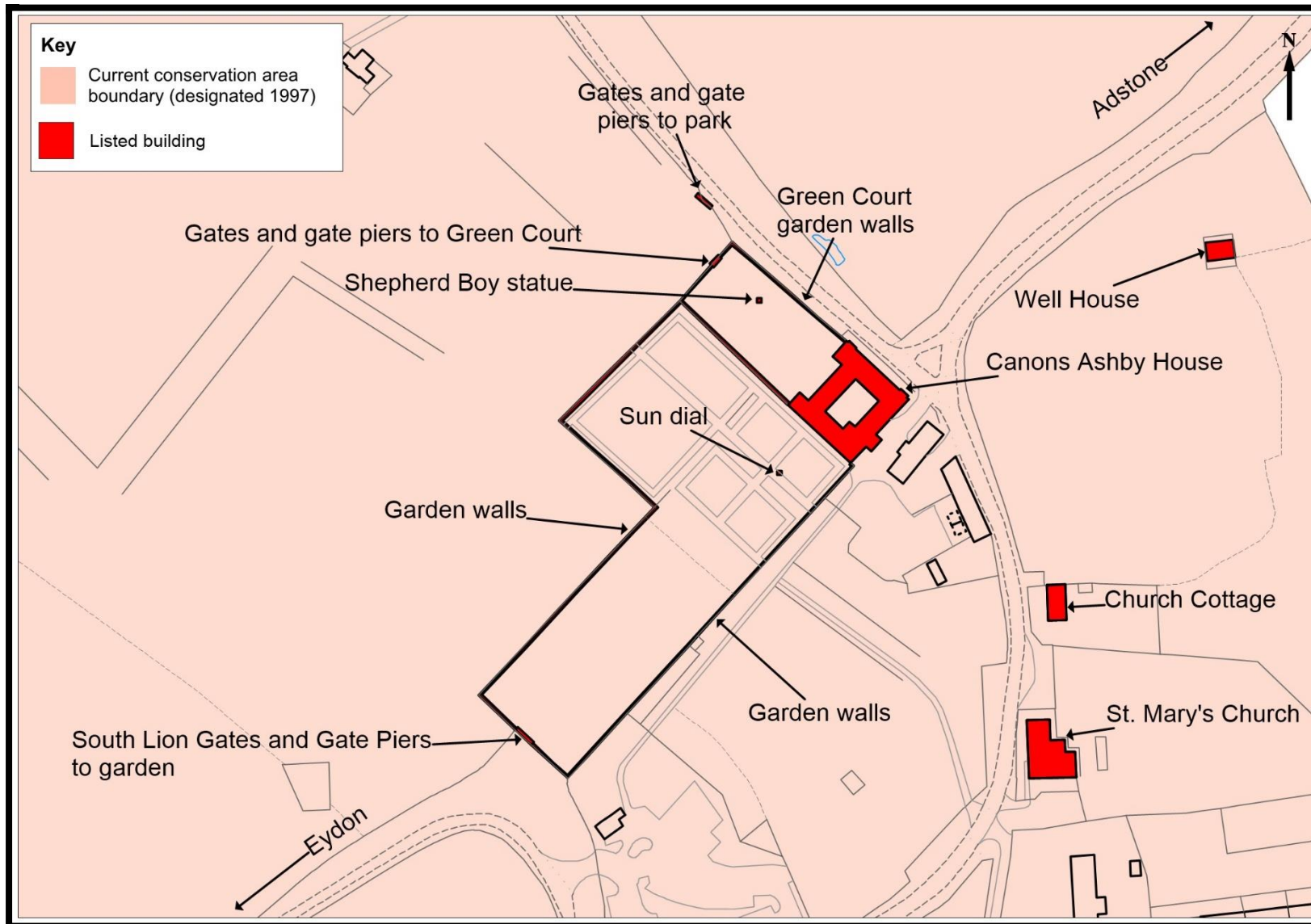


Figure 4: Listed buildings within the conservation area



### 3.1 Proposed boundary 2022

The current conservation area boundary (last reviewed in 1997) includes Canons Ashby House and the Registered Park and Garden in which it is situated. The village of Canons Ashby is also included, as are the archaeological remains of the medieval settlement and the site of the medieval priory, which are designated as part of the scheduled monument. The special architectural and historic interest found in the conservation area at the time of its designation in 1997, include examples of vernacular architecture, and the presence of designated and non-designated heritage assets.

The proposed boundary changes are show in Figure 5.

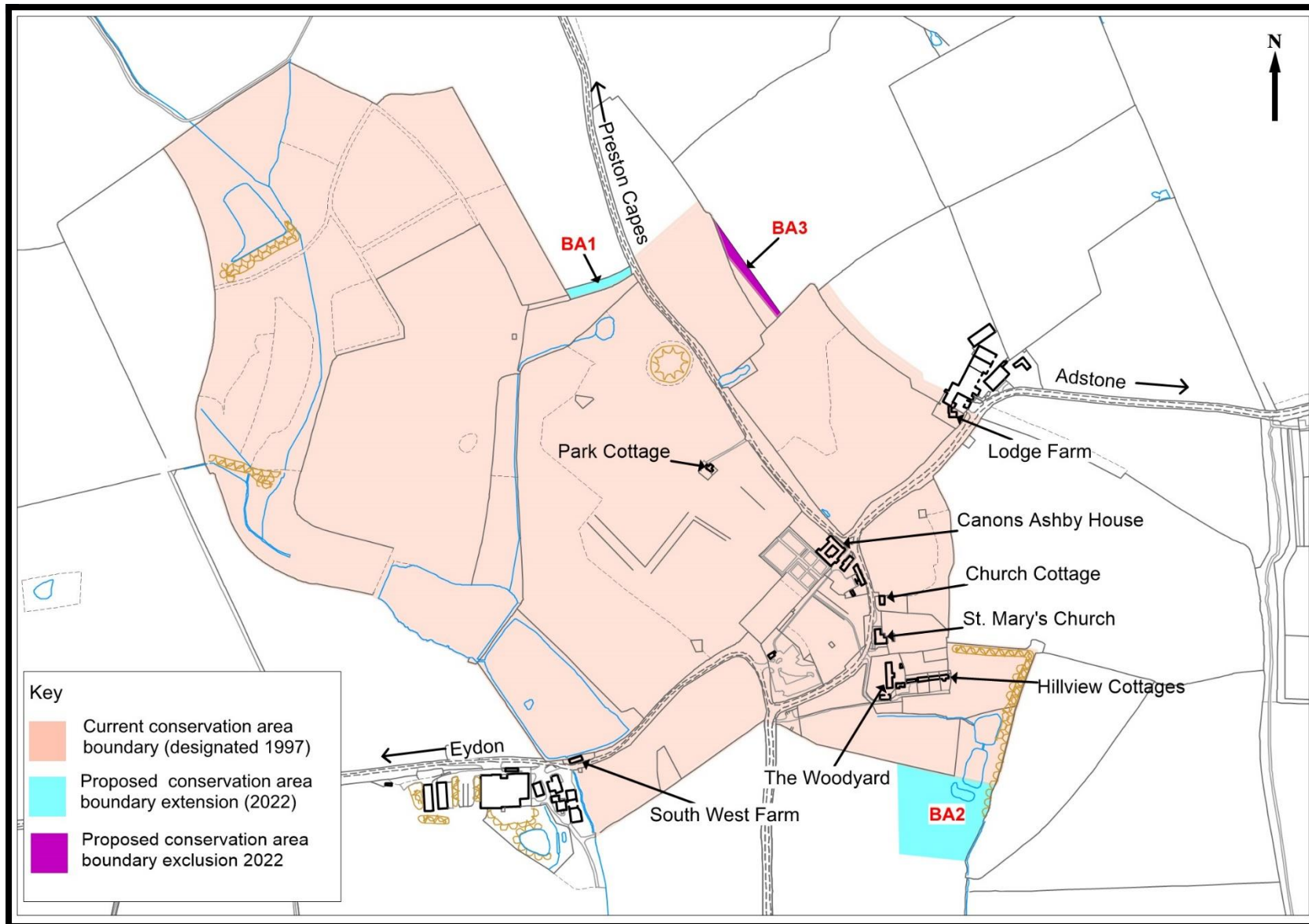
It is proposed to amend the conservation area boundary to:

- Include a small, lightly wooded area on the west side of the Preston Capes road (BA1). This area is included within the Registered Park and Garden designation. It adjoins other wooded areas within the parkland of Canons Ashby House that are part of the designation. Therefore, in order to have a consistent approach to the wooded areas within the Registered Park and Garden it is proposed to include this area also.
- Include an area to the south of Hill View Cottages (BA2). The current conservation area boundary includes the most northerly of three ponds and most of the middle pond but excludes its southern end as well as a third pond to the south. This proposed extension includes the three ponds in

their entirety. They probably originated as medieval fishponds but later became features of the 16<sup>th</sup> century garden that existed in this area. The extension would also incorporate an earthen bank south of the ponds that survives as an upstanding earthwork and is probably a continuation of the 'Canons Walk'. This elevated walkway was also a feature of the 16<sup>th</sup> century garden and much of it is already included in the current conservation area boundary. The proposed extension therefore has archaeological potential in relation to these features and provides consistency with the boundary of the designated Registered Park and Garden.

- Exclude a narrow strip of land to the northwest of Lodge Farm so the conservation area boundary is on the same alignment as the scheduled monument in this area (BA3).

Figure 5: Map showing the current conservation area boundary and proposed extensions





## 4 Summary of Special Interest

Special architectural or historic interest can manifest in a variety of forms. Current guidance from Historic England sets out types of special interest which have led to designation, including;

- Areas with high numbers of designated heritage assets, and a variety of architectural styles and historic associations
- Those linked to a particular industry or individual with a particular local interest
- Where an earlier, historically significant, layout is visible in the modern street pattern
- Where a particular style of architecture or traditional building materials predominate
- Areas designated because of the quality of the public realm or a spatial element, such as a design form or settlement pattern, green spaces which are an essential component of a wider historic area, and historic parks and gardens and other designed landscapes, including those on the Historic England Register of parks and gardens of special historic interest.

The special interest of the Canons Ashby Conservation Area derives from the following key characteristics:

- The various heritage assets within Canons Ashby and its surrounding landscape, many of which survive as upstanding archaeological earthworks, buildings and landscape features, provide a detailed insight into the

development of the settlement over a period of a thousand years and a tangible link to the village's past

- There is a high number of heritage assets that are statutory designations on the National Heritage List for England (NHLE). They comprise twelve listed buildings, including St. Mary's Church and Canons Ashby House which are both listed at Grade I; the scheduled monument (NHLE UID 1015534) that includes the remains of a medieval castle motte, medieval settlement, ridge and furrow cultivation, medieval priory site, a 16<sup>th</sup> century garden, parts of the landscape park and a series of five dams; Canons Ashby Registered Park and Garden (Grade II\*, NHLE UID 1000488) (see Appendix for details)
- There are several non-designated heritage assets which contribute to the historic character of the conservation area through their vernacular character and use of characteristic building materials such as ironstone
- Archaeological field work, including partial excavation of the medieval castle motte and the priory site, and a survey of the 16<sup>th</sup> century garden earthworks, has provided additional information about these sites but there is further archaeological potential, including buried deposits
- The use of the local geology, ironstone, as the predominant building material gives the conservation area a coherent character
- There are many individual, groups and avenues of trees that contribute to the parkland and the designed landscape character of the conservation area. Trees also play an

important part in softening the built environment and enhancing the rural character of the village

- There are many important views through the conservation area, particularly of St. Mary's Church, Canons Ashby House and its gardens, and the parkland. Several avenues of trees within the parkland channel views towards eyecatchers, for example, Park Cottage. St. Mary's Church is a landmark building that dominates the centre of the village. The tower, with its distinctive pinnacles at each corner, is visible in numerous views towards and through the conservation area (see Section 7.3)
- There are only a small number of dwellings in Canons Ashby and the dispersed nature of the village accentuates its rural character and its origins as a larger medieval village which subsequently became depopulated.
- Canons Ashby House was the home of the 19<sup>th</sup> century antiquary and archaeologist Sir Henry Dryden, who is well known for his archaeological and architectural drawings of buildings and features from Britain and Europe.

## 5 Location and Settlement Context

Canons Ashby is located on the western edge of West Northamptonshire, approximately 8 miles due south of Daventry and 15 miles southwest of Northampton. The conservation area lies within the West Northamptonshire Uplands Environmental Character Type<sup>1</sup> and within Historic Landscape Character Area 6<sup>2</sup>, which in this area of the county takes the form of broad hills and high ridges, giving the landscape a character of rolling hills and sheltered valleys.

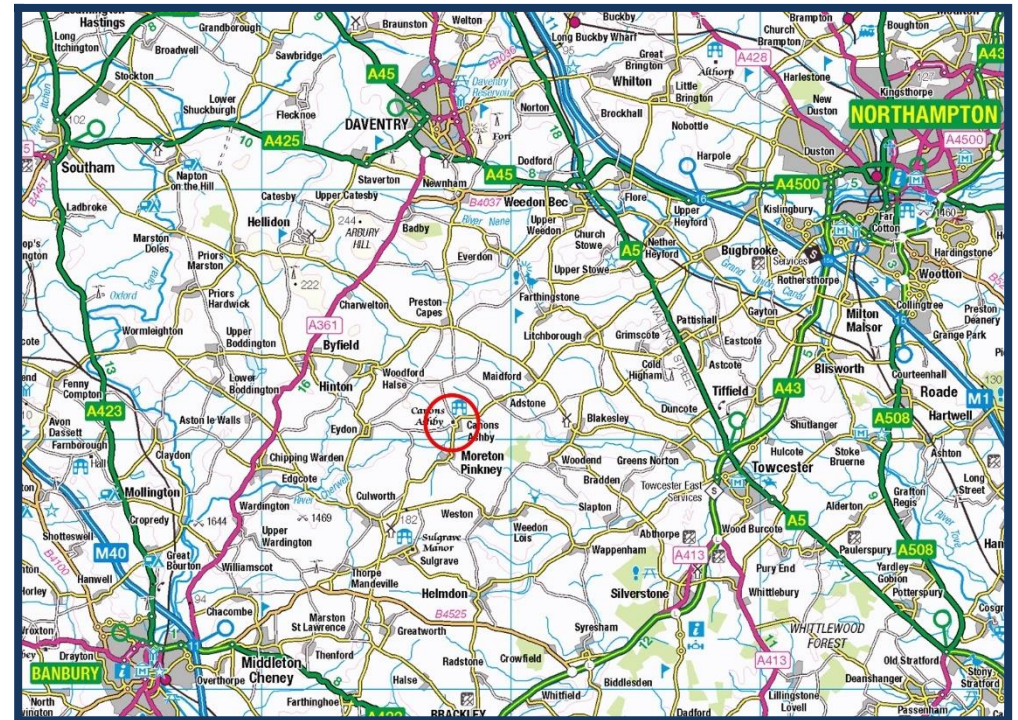
Canons Ashby sits at a height of 160m OD on a south-facing slope. The countryside to the southwest falls away into the valley below where the stream course has been dammed to create several large pools. To the north of the village the land continues to rise gently to a height of 170m.

The underlying geology comprises Lias Group Clays, which are capped by Marlstone Rock and Northampton Sand Formations, which are the source of the ironstone that forms the principal building material in the village.

The conservation area includes almost all the buildings in the village except agricultural buildings at South West Farm and Lodge Farm. It extends to include much of the registered park and garden designation ([CANONS ASHBY, Canons Ashby - 1000488 | Historic England](#)), the earthworks of the shrunken medieval settlement to

the north of the Preston Capes road and the site of the medieval priory, both of which form part of the scheduled monument designation ([Canons Ashby: the remains of a medieval monastery, castle, settlement and fields, post-medieval houses, gardens and park, and a series of five dams, Canons Ashby - 1015534 | Historic England](#)).

Figure 6: Map showing the location of Canons Ashby



<sup>1</sup> Environmental Character Assessment and Key Issues  
<http://nrnpenvironmentalcharacter.org.uk/>

<sup>2</sup> Historic Landscape Character Assessment  
<http://nrnpenvironmentalcharacter.org.uk/>

## 6 Historical Development

Lying just outside the conservation area, to the west of the Preston Capes road, several ditches and an enclosure have been recorded on an aerial photograph, indicating a possible settlement site, although the date of occupation is unknown<sup>3</sup>.

Further to the south, and situated within the current parkland of Canons Ashby House, is more evidence of early occupation in the form of a large grass-covered mound. It may represent the remains of an early fortification, possibly the remains of an 'adularine' motte and bailey castle dating to the 12<sup>th</sup> century<sup>4</sup>. Archaeological excavation of a section of the mound was undertaken in 2014 and certainly supports this theory. It is thought that during the 18<sup>th</sup> century the sides of the mound were altered to give it a hexagonal shape, the top was reduced in height and trees were planted as part of the landscaping works for the parkland<sup>5</sup>.

The village itself, known early in its history as 'Ashby', is recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086. It was a relatively small settlement at this time, having 9 villagers, 3 smallholders and 4 slaves<sup>6</sup> but continued to grow until the founding of the priory in the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century. It reached the peak of its size in the 14<sup>th</sup> century when there were 41 households and the poll tax was paid by 82 people.

<sup>3</sup> Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record (Monument no. 688)

<sup>4</sup> Canons Ashby Parkland Plan, Cookson and Tickner Landscape Architecture (2013, reviewed 2019)

Figure 7: Earthwork mound, possibly a medieval motte in the parkland at Canons Ashby House



However, during the late 15<sup>th</sup> century the population began to decline as a result of a move towards a pastoral economy and the enclosure of arable land for the grazing of sheep, in this case by the Augustinian priory, which had been established during the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century. Documentary evidence indicates that by 1455-56 only 22 properties remained in the village, a 50% reduction in the size of

<sup>5</sup> National Heritage List for England [Canons Ashby: the remains of a medieval monastery, castle, settlement and fields, post-medieval houses, gardens and park, and a series of five dams, Canons Ashby - 1015534 | Historic England](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Home | Domesday Book \(opendomesday.org\)](#)

the settlement from 100 years previously. The process of enclosure continued into the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, when three houses were destroyed and 24 people were evicted as a result of the enclosure of 100 acres of land <sup>7</sup>.

The remains of the village survive as well-preserved earthworks on the east side of the Preston Capes road within Parkers Close and New Piece. Crofts and tofts, as well as several building platforms, can be seen with a hollow way running roughly north to south along the eastern edge of the settlement. The earthworks also continue in a strip adjacent to the Adstone road as far as Lodge Farm and may represent a later extension to the village. Although the visible earthworks only survive on the east side of the Preston Capes road, there may have been further tenements on the west side, which have been masked by post-medieval landscaping for the park. Documentary evidence from the 16<sup>th</sup> century indicates that there was at least one farm standing on this side of the road. In addition, it is unlikely that the 41 properties recorded in 1344-45 could fit within the area of the surviving earthworks<sup>8</sup>. Both the settlement earthworks and the possible motte form part of a larger area that is designated as a scheduled monument (NLHE UID 1015534).

It is possible that the road layout that is seen today was slightly different during the medieval period. For example, the road leading out of the village towards Preston Capes may have been on a

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<sup>7</sup> An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Northamptonshire, Volume 3, Archaeological Sites in North-West Northamptonshire, RCHME (1981), p34-37

different alignment; the archaeological earthworks show an awkward step in the road layout and the modern road cuts the ridge and furrow (see Figure 8). In addition, the Adstone road may, during the medieval period, have formed a crossroad running through or adjacent to the present garden of Canons Ashby House to join with the hollow way that runs southwest towards Eydon. This is supported by the fact that it is unlikely that a main road would have run through the monastic precinct as it does today. The medieval route was probably diverted during the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century as part of the laying out of the house and its gardens.

The Augustinian Priory, founded in the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century, was constructed to the south of the village. It was small, housing no more than thirteen canons. The present Church of St. Mary is what remains of the priory church, which was shared with the village. When the priory was occupied, the church extended much further to the east, having five bays and a chancel. The greater part of the nave was demolished after the Dissolution leaving two bays of the nave and the tower, the latter being an addition to the building in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century. The priory buildings, such as the cloisters, cells and refectory were all situated on the south side of the church and have been partially excavated.

Lying to the north of the church within The Orchard is a well house known as the Norwell, which may have supplied the priory with water, and later Canons Ashby House. The well house structure is

<sup>8</sup> 'Canons Ashby, Northamptonshire: An Archaeological Report', Foard, G.R. 1982, p.1-3

built from coursed, squared ironstone and has an arched doorway with a roof of stone and is probably of 16<sup>th</sup> century date. It is a Grade II listed building (NHLE UID 1075308).

Shortly after the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 1530s, the priory and its estate eventually passed to Sir John Cope, who initiated the dismantling of the priory buildings. It is thought that he converted the Prior's lodgings into a house, which was eventually demolished in 1669. Two arms of a moat surviving as an earthwork, situated just south of Hill View Cottages, are probably associated with this house, as are further earthworks to the southeast that are probably the remains of pleasure gardens. The earthworks comprise a linear earthwork with a ditch on either side that is interpreted as a raised walk-way from which the gardens could be viewed. The area also includes a circular earthen mound which is thought to have been a prospect mound, again a location from which to view the whole gardens from an elevated position. Another feature within this area is a series of three medieval fishponds that were re-used as a feature of the later gardens<sup>9</sup>. Together, these features represent a rare example of a post-Dissolution garden that survive as visible earthworks.

Following the ownership of Sir John Cope, parts of the estate then passed to the Dryden family and it was on this part of the estate that John Dryden built Canons Ashby House in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, incorporating parts of Wylkyns Farm, which form the northwest and

east wings of the present house. He also added the Tower House, which forms the southwest part of the present house. The tower contained domestic rooms and the adjoining block contained two large rooms at both ground and first floor level. In the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, John Dryden extended the farmhouse eastwards by one bay and in doing so connected it to the tower house with a two-storey range containing a hall at ground level and a gallery at first floor level. This created a building with a symmetrical H-plan with a brick façade, which was an early use of brick as a building material in Northamptonshire. Further extensions in the late 16<sup>th</sup> or early 17<sup>th</sup> century gave the house its courtyard plan.<sup>10</sup>

It was in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century that Edward Dryden drastically changed the appearance of the house, re-facing the south elevation to create a fashionable, symmetrical façade with rows of sash windows. The west range was also made more orderly by blocking some existing windows and adding sash windows. The existing, off-centre doorway was blocked and a large central doorway with a baroque surround was added. This formed the principal entrance to the house until c. 1840, through a gateway from the Preston Capes road into the park, along a short driveway and then into the Green Court.

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<sup>9</sup> National Heritage List for England (NHLE) List entry UID 1015534 [Canons Ashby: the remains of a medieval monastery, castle, settlement and fields, post-medieval](#)

[houses, gardens and park, and a series of five dams, Canons Ashby - 1015534 | Historic England](#)

<sup>10</sup> Historic Building Recording at Canons Ashby House (2017), MOLA

Figure 8: Survey produced by the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments of England, 1981, showing archaeological features surviving as earthworks

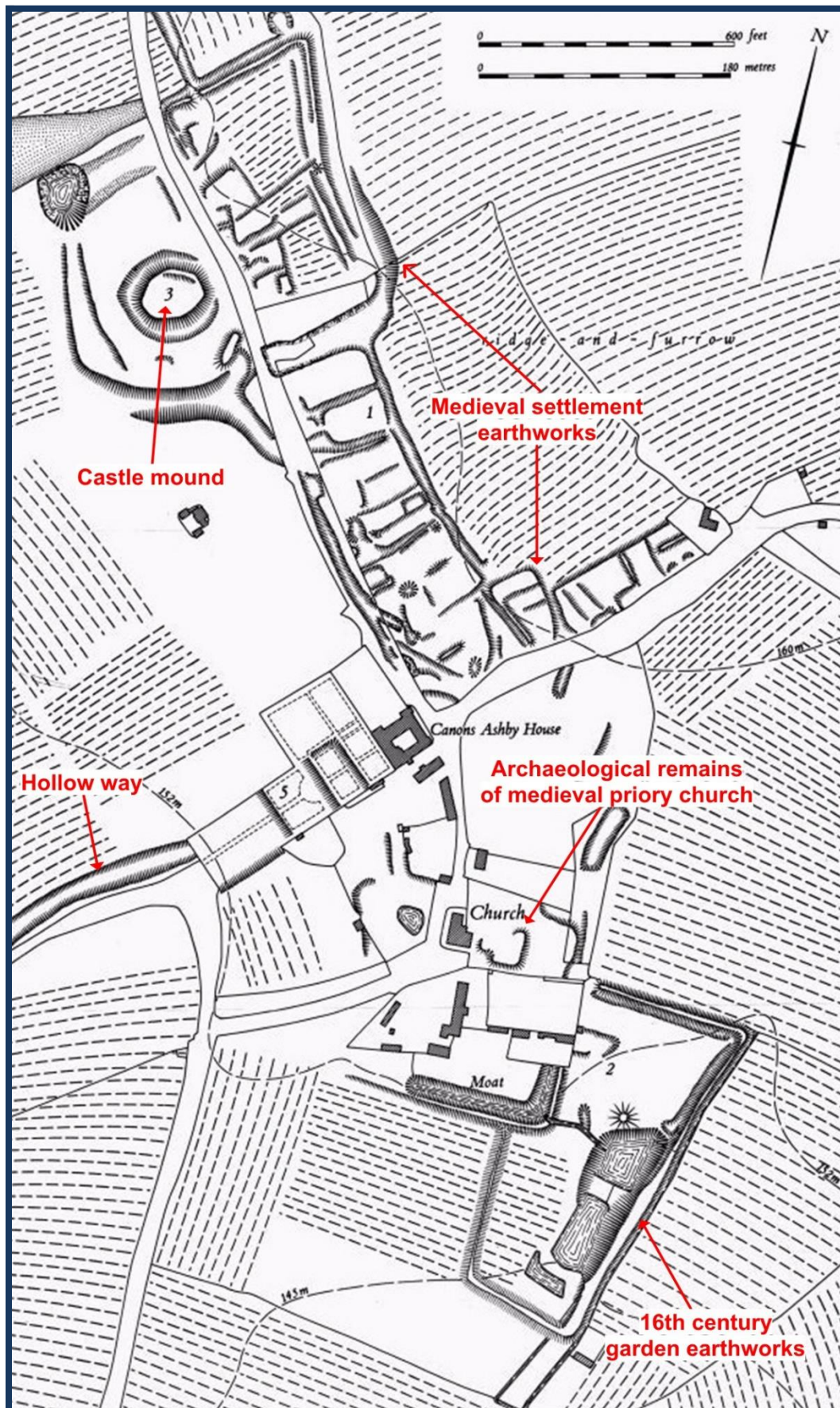


Figure 9: The south elevation of Canons Ashby House and formal gardens



Figure 10: Early 18<sup>th</sup> century baroque-style entrance and earlier blocked doorway



<sup>11</sup> National Heritage List for England (NHLE) List entry UID 1015534 [Canons Ashby: the remains of a medieval monastery, castle, settlement and fields, post-medieval](#)

Between 1708 and 1710, Edward Dryden also laid out the formal gardens that can be seen today in order to provide a suitable setting for the house. The main gardens on the south side of the house were designed in a series of four terraced gardens with a central axial path leading from the entrance in this side of the house to a central gateway at the southern end of the garden, via a splayed flight of stone steps. Of the little documentary evidence relating to the design of the gardens, a 1711 survey refers to them as the 'best garden', 'upper garden', 'lower garden' and 'the little one below'. They are thought to have been designed <sup>11</sup> in the style of George London (d.1714) and Henry Wise (d.1738).

Lying to the northwest of Canons Ashby House and its formal gardens there is a small parkland measuring approximately 1km by 700m. Presumably it was laid out at the same time as the gardens c.1710. Much of the parkland has ridge and furrow earthworks running roughly from northeast to southwest, representing an area of the open fields cultivated by inhabitants of the village prior to emparkment. The northern-most area of the park is wooded but the central and southwestern areas are largely open pasture with mature specimen and parkland trees. At the southwest edge of the park there is a series of four large fishponds separated by a series of dams. It is thought these may have originated in the medieval period as monastic fishponds or mill ponds and were later adapted

[houses, gardens and park, and a series of five dams, Canons Ashby - 1015534 | Historic England](#)



to create a more ornamental feature of the landscape park. A mill may have stood at the south end of the second pond<sup>12</sup>. Also within the park, and situated approximately 150m northwest of Canons Ashby House is Park Cottage. The part of the building with the pointed roof was constructed in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century and its original use was as a deer larder. It was later converted into a gamekeeper's cottage with several single-storey extensions being added in 1867. A line of lime trees runs from just outside the entrance to the Green Court in a north-westerly direction and draws the eye towards the cottage.

Figure 11: Park Cottage, formerly a deer larder



Other designed landscape features, in the form of avenues of trees, exist elsewhere in the registered park and garden. A second avenue runs southeast from east of the formal gardens and frames the church. A third, double avenue of lime trees, recently replanted by the National Trust, runs southwest from the gates at the bottom of the garden through part of Lower Sehego. This replaced a double avenue of elms, which is depicted on the 1884 Ordnance Survey map, that continued for approximately 700m.

There has been little development within the conservation area in recent years. In two locations at its edge some large agricultural buildings have been constructed at South West Farm and northeast of Lodge Farm.

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<sup>12</sup> Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record

Figure 12: Extract from the 1884 Ordnance Survey map showing key historic features

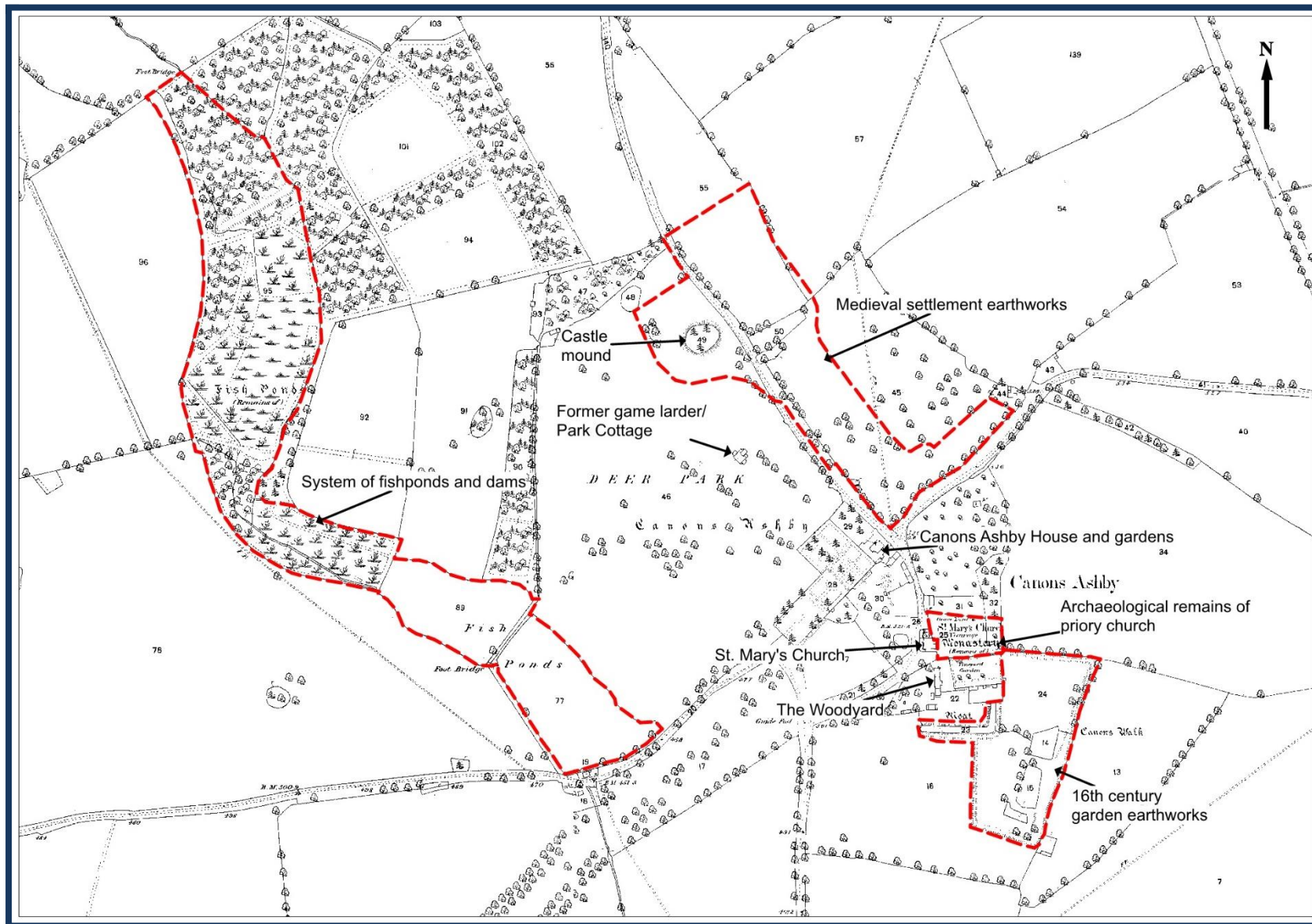


Figure 13: Extract from the 1900 Ordnance Survey Map showing key historic features

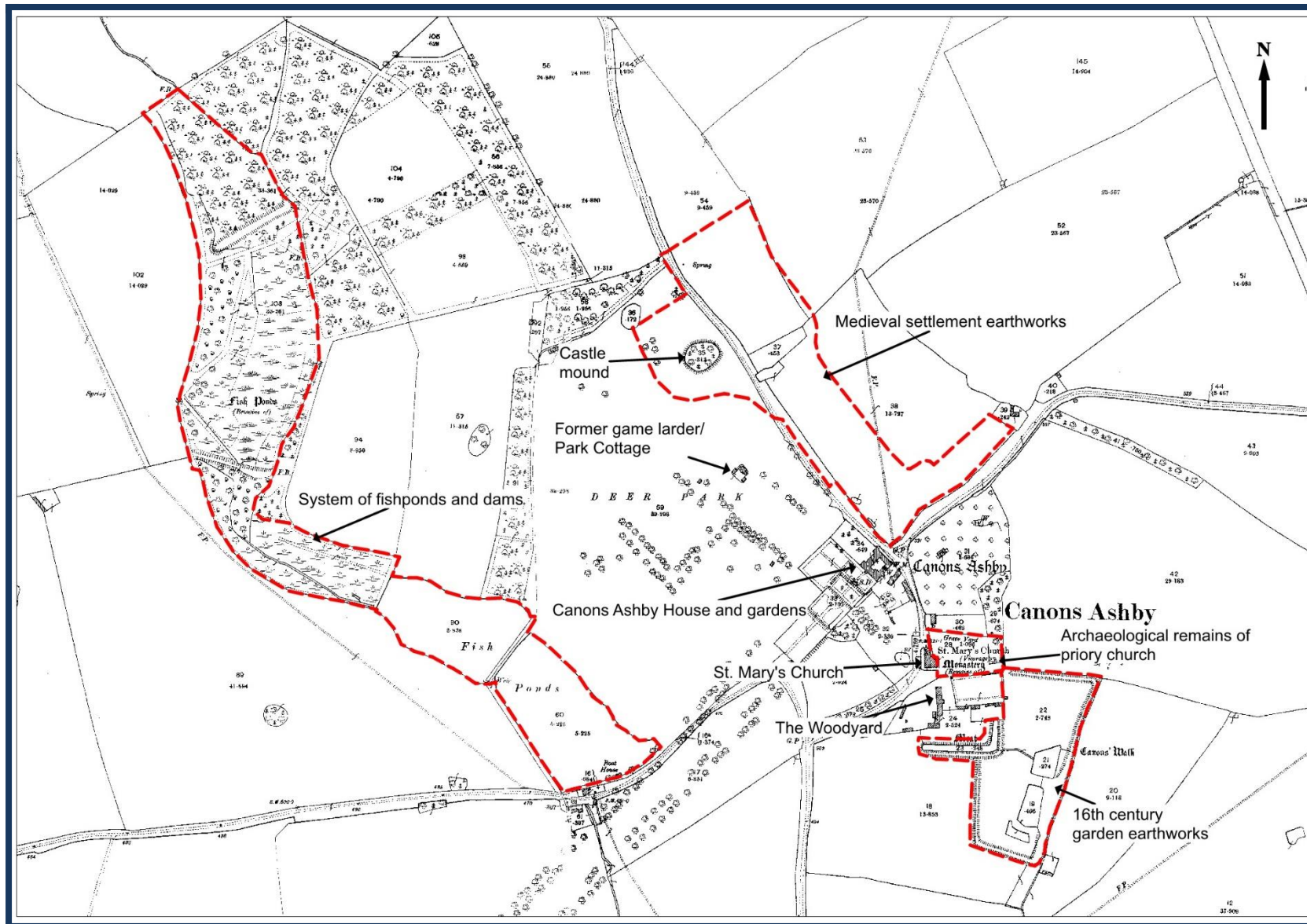


Figure 14: Contemporary mapping showing key historic features

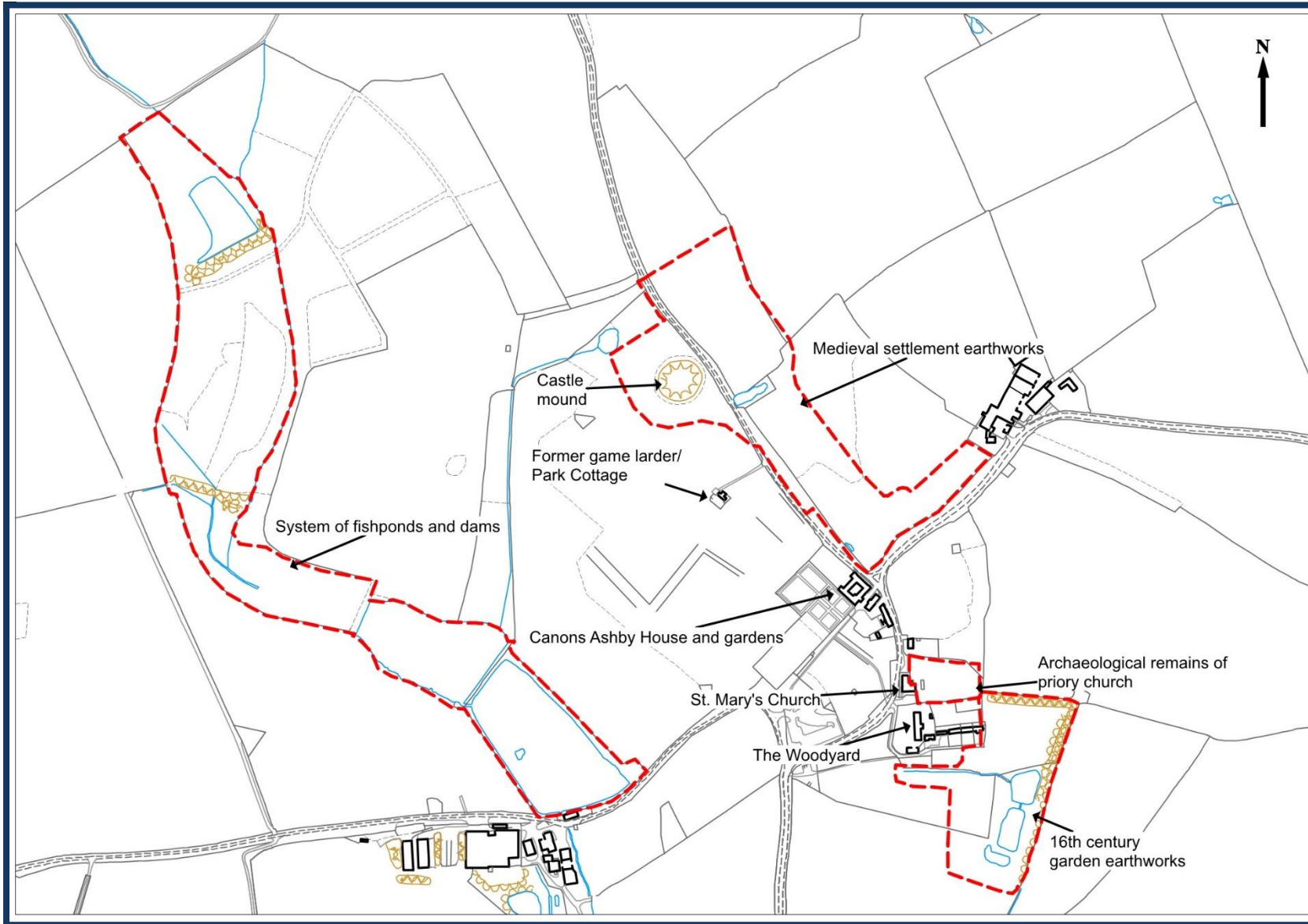
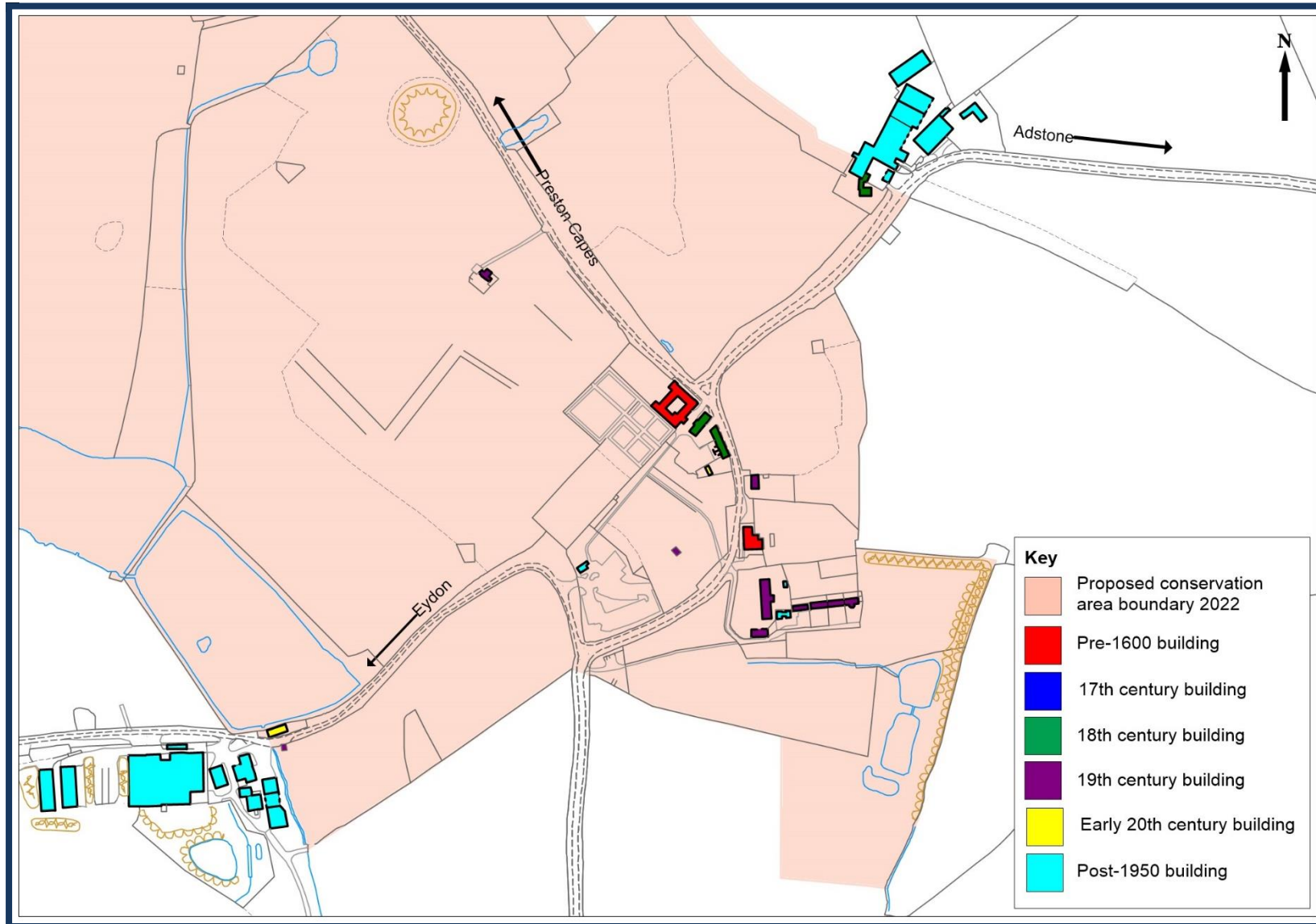


Figure 15: Map showing probable building ages within the proposed conservation area and its immediate surroundings



## 7 Spatial Character

Settlement character is not only formed by the buildings within a conservation area; but also the spaces between those buildings and other features of interest. This could include settlement layout, green infrastructure, trees, open spaces, the public realm, and views. The contribution of these “spatial” features to the character and appearance of the conservation area is set out below.

### 7.1 Spatial Character Summary

- The village of Canons Ashby is situated on high ground which gently falls away to the south, down to a small valley where several dams have been created to form a series of large ponds.
- Canons Ashby Conservation Area has a tranquil, rural character created by the dispersed layout of the village and the area of parkland to its northwest.
- The approaches to Canons Ashby, particularly along the Preston Capes and Eydon roads, are along narrow lanes with hedges either side that contribute to the rural and remote character of the village
- As the conservation area is entered along the Preston Capes road there are views into the parkland and of Canons Ashby House itself which create the impression of a high status and designed landscape
- There are only a few buildings within the conservation area and they are well-dispersed, with the only concentration being to

the south of St. Mary’s Church, which gives the impression that this area forms the centre of the village

- There are many open spaces within the conservation area formed by parkland, enclosed pasture, paddocks and an orchard. These enable views through and outwards from the conservation area as well as enhancing the setting of the village’s historic buildings and other heritage features
- Archaeological remains of the shrunken medieval settlement, castle motte, fishponds and 16<sup>th</sup> century garden layout, in the form of earthworks, provide visible evidence of how the village developed. They provide a tangible link to the past
- There are several footpaths within and around the edges of the conservation area that date back to at least the 19<sup>th</sup> century and may be considerably older, having been used as prominent routes between Canons Ashby and surrounding villages
- There are many important views within, from and towards the conservation area (see Section 7.3). The tower of St. Mary’s Church, with its distinctive pinnacles at each corner, is a feature of many of these views
- Trees make a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area. There are currently no Tree Preservation Order Trees within the conservation area but there are individual and groups of trees that make an important contribution to the rural and parkland character and setting of the conservation area (see Figure 17). They contribute to the visual amenity of the village and soften the built environment. Ornamental and parkland trees are an important feature of the designed landscape gardens and parkland of Canons Ashby House. As well as clumps, woodlands and individual parkland

trees, some of which are several hundred years old, there are avenues of trees that channel views. Several of these avenues have been replanted by the National Trust in recent years based on documentary evidence of the historic layout of the designed landscape, for example the double elm avenue running southwest from the southwest end of the formal gardens. There is a significant number of veteran trees, some of which are in decline but nonetheless are historically and ecologically important and which contribute to the sense of time depth of the village and parkland.

## 7.2 Areas of Archaeological Potential

Archaeological interest can be both remains surviving below the ground or evidence for past activity that is contained within standing buildings and structures.

Evidence of past settlement remains in Canons Ashby contributes to the special historic interest and setting of the conservation area; the archaeological remains enhance the legibility of the development of the settlement and have the potential to yield further evidence of the area's history.

### **Potential archaeological deposits within the conservation area include:**

AP1: The site of the shrunken medieval village, medieval castle motte, medieval priory, 16<sup>th</sup> century house and gardens, and Canons Ashby House and gardens.

AP2, 3, 4, 6 and 7: A series of medieval fishponds and dams.

### **Potential archaeological deposits on the fringes of the conservation area include:**

AP5: The possible site of a watermill.

AP8: Cropmarks of undated ditches and enclosures visible on aerial photographs indicate the site of a possible settlement.

AP9: Site of possible windmill mound.

Areas of archaeological potential which make a particularly strong contribution to the immediate setting of the conservation area will be considered for inclusion within the boundary as per Historic

England advice. Not all areas can reasonably be included within the conservation area. The exclusion of areas from the boundary does not reduce their positive contribution to the setting of the conservation area through their historic interest nor preclude the possibility of that area yielding significant archaeological evidence which may enhance our understanding of the past.



Figure 16: Areas of archaeological potential within and on the edge of the conservation area

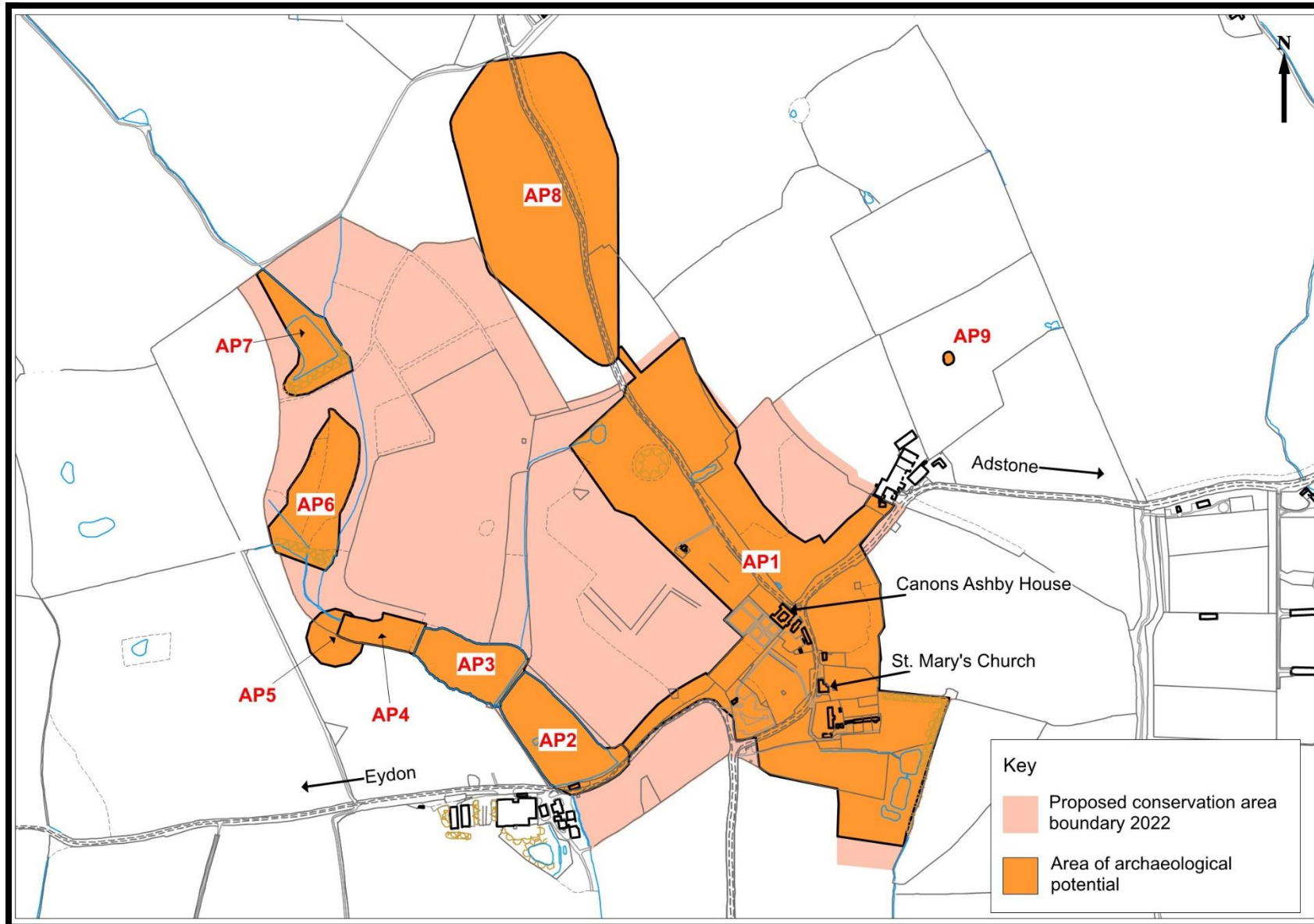
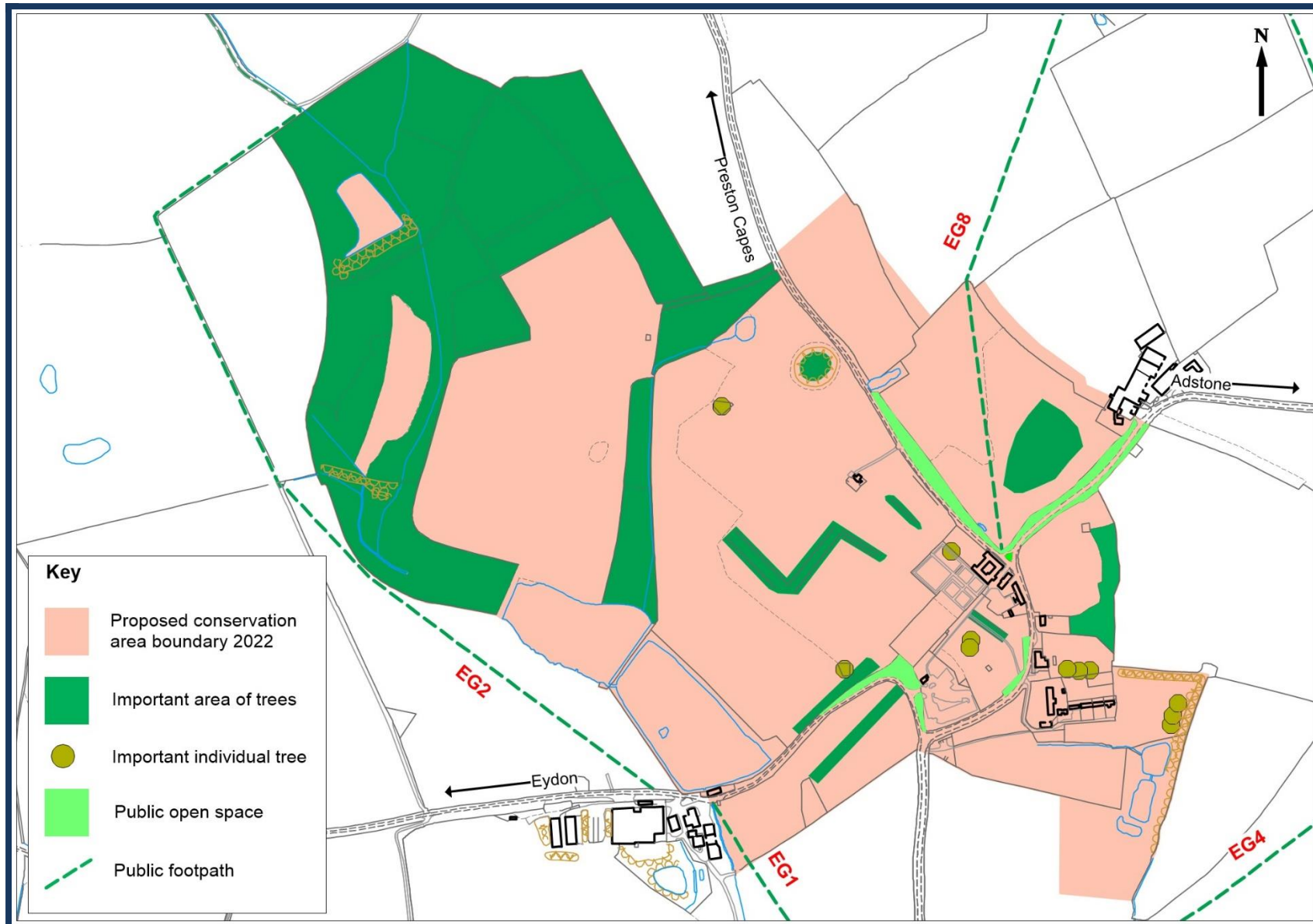


Figure 17: Map showing important public footpaths and important areas and individual trees in and around the edges of the conservation area



### 7.3 Views and Vistas

Views and vistas impact upon and contribute to how the conservation area is experienced, both within the boundary and from outside the designation. Views of the surrounding landscape from Canons Ashby are also an important consideration for the setting of the conservation area.

As well as the overall contribution of the surrounding landscape, individual features can create particular interest within views. This is particularly the case within the gardens at Canons Ashby House, for example the views northeast and southwest along the central axis of the garden with the Lion Gates as the focal point at one end and the house itself at the opposite end.

Both long and short views highlight the landmark buildings within the conservation area, namely Canons Ashby House and St. Mary's Church. The church in particular is a prominent feature in many views, both long and short, especially its tower which rises up above the tree cover. Various long views out from the conservation area to the surrounding countryside highlight its rural setting.

Figures 18 and 19 identify those views that are particularly important and the photographs show examples of these views. The omission of a particular view from the map does not preclude its significance.

#### **Important views within the conservation area:**

#### **V1: Looking northeast towards Canons Ashby House from the park**

The view towards Canons Ashby House from just outside the garden boundary wall and from within the park takes in the southwest elevation of the house with its central tower and the formal gardens on its southwest and northwest sides.

#### **V2: Looking through the Grade II listed Lion Gates towards Canons Ashby House**

From the Eydon road there is a view of the Grade II\* listed Lion Gates, through the gardens along the central walk-way, which terminates with a view of the house and its central tower.

#### **V3: Looking southwest from the top terrace of the garden at Canons Ashby House**

This view from the top terrace of the gardens looks down the central pathway towards the Lion Gates and to the rolling hills of the surrounding countryside. It highlights Canon Ashby's rural setting.

#### **V4: The view southeast through the gateway into gardens at Canons Ashby House**

From the parkland there is a view through the early 18<sup>th</sup> century gateway, whose piers are surmounted by urns, to the formal gardens. The eye is drawn along the gravel path through the gardens towards the tower of St. Mary's Church, which is the focal point of the view.

#### **V5: Looking northwest through the Green Court**

Standing outside the entrance to the northwest wing of Canons Ashby House, the eye is drawn along between two lines of clipped

yew trees to the Grade II listed statue of the Shepherd Boy and the gateway into the park behind.

**V6: View northwest through the upper terrace gardens**

From this location there is a view across the gardens to the impressive Cedar of Lebanon tree.

**V7: The view across the northwest towards Park Cottage**

From just outside the gateway to the Green Court, looking northwest, there is a view along a line of trees towards Park Cottage, a former game larder that was subsequently converted into residential dwelling. It is a distinctive building with an unusual roof design.

**V8: Looking west from within the parkland**

Looking westwards are views of the ridge and furrow earthworks within the park as well as the variety of parkland trees. From the elevated position near to the Preston Capes road, there are long views through the park to the rural landscape beyond.

**V9: View of possible motte earthwork and parkland**

As the conservation area is entered from the Preston Capes road there are views of the possible motte earthwork within the parkland, which shows its profile, as well as the parkland character of the land in which it is situated.

**V10: View of the house and entrance gateway from Preston Capes road**

From the road there is a view of the north elevation of Preston Capes House and the Grade II listed gateway that was formerly the main entrance into the park and to the house through the Green Court.

**V11: Views from footpath EG8 across medieval earthworks**

From the footpath there are views across the earthwork remains of the medieval shrunken settlement and ridge and furrow, part of the scheduled monument, which are a reminder of the age of Canons Ashby as a settlement.

**V12: The view south to St. Mary's Church along the main road through the village**

Views along the road highlight the church as a landmark building within Canons Ashby. They also highlight the small and dispersed character of the settlement, with the paddock called Sehego Nob and the orchard on either side of the road. Church Cottage also features in this view, built from ironstone and with the church, boundary wall to Canons Ashby House and its outbuildings, helps to create a coherent character.

**V13: Looking north along the main road through the village**

This is a view of the St. Mary's Church with the paddock on the opposite side of the road which highlights the church's prominence as a building in the village.

**V14: Looking towards the northeast elevation of Canons Ashby House from the road junction**

From the point where the Preston Capes road and the Adstone road meet there is a view of the northeast and southeast elevations of Canons Ashby House. The respective elevations have a contrasting appearance in terms of their materials and detailing, which provides a sense that the building developed over a span of time.

**V15: Looking south from footpath EG8**

On approaching Canons Ashby along this footpath there is a view of the northeast brick elevation of Canons Ashby House with the church tower behind.

**V16: Looking northeast from footpath EG1**

This view looks up the slope from footpath EG1 towards Canons Ashby House and St. Mary's Church, both of which are visible through the trees.

**V17: The view across the paddock towards the church**

The view east across the paddock with the church dominating the view, highlights the open and loose-knit character of the settlement, as well as the importance of this open space to the setting of the Grade I listed building.

**V18: Looking northwest along an avenue of trees towards one of the gateways to the gardens of Canons Ashby House**

The eye is drawn along the avenue of lime trees towards the gateway in the east wall of the gardens of Canons Ashby House. The view demonstrates elements of the designed landscape and the status of Canons Ashby House within the village.

**V19: Looking west across the site of the demolished area of the medieval priory church**

From this location there are views across the site of the demolished part of the medieval priory church, which is now a small, enclosed area of grassland with the graveyard at its west end. There is a good view past four yew trees of the rear of the church at the top of the slope. There are also views of the tall 16<sup>th</sup> century garden wall, which forms the southern boundary.

**V20: Looking east across the parkland towards Canons Ashby House**

There are views looking across the ridge and furrow within the parkland towards Canons Ashby House standing at the top of the slope. The view highlights the changing land use types that the landscape has undergone through time.

**Important views towards the conservation area:**

**V21: The View northeast from footpath EG2**

This view looks across the southern-most medieval fishpond into the parkland and up the slope to Canons Ashby House, with the rendered central tower providing a focal point. The pinnacles of the tower of St. Mary's Church are visible protruding from the top of the treeline. The view highlights the spatial relationship between the fishponds, parkland, the house and the church.

**V22: Looking north from footpath EG2 towards parkland**

This view looks across one of the fishponds at the edge of the registered park and garden towards an open area of the parkland

which is screened by woodland when looking towards it from other locations. The view highlights the parkland character of the landscape and the ample tree-cover and the tranquil nature of this area of the landscape.

#### **V23: The view northeast from footpath EG1**

There is a view towards the conservation area in which the church tower is visible emerging from the trees. The view also takes in the trees in the parkland and it highlights the verdant character of the conservation area. Where there is a gap in the tree cover, there are views of the ridge and furrow earthworks running through the parkland.

#### **V24: The view west from footpath EG4**

From this footpath there are views of Hill View Cottages, The Woodyard and the tower of St. Mary's Church, with its distinctive pinnacle tower protruding from the trees.

#### **V25: The view southwest from the Adstone road**

Looking southwest from the Adstone road, just south of Lodge Farm, there are views through the trees of the tower of St. Mary's Church, which gives the sense that the village is about to be entered.

#### **V26: Looking southeast into the conservation area from the Preston Capes road**

As the road is traversed there are short views into the fields on the east side of the road where there are well-preserved earthworks of the medieval settlement and ridge and furrow cultivation. This gives a sense of the age of Canons Ashby as a settlement.

### **Important views outwards from the conservation area:**

#### **V27: The view northeast from footpath EG8**

In the foreground ridge and furrow earthworks provide a visual link to the village's agricultural past. From this location there are also long views of the rural landscape in which Canons Ashby is located, which illustrate its remoteness.

#### **V28: The view southeast from the Adstone road**

There are long views towards the southeast from this location which highlight the rural setting of Canons Ashby and the undulating countryside to the east of the village, which contrasts with the flatter topography to the north.

#### **V29: The view east from the churchyard**

From the churchyard there are views east to the open countryside with the impressive wall of the 16<sup>th</sup> century walled garden associated with Sir John Cope's house in the foreground. The view illustrates the rural character of Canons Ashby and the changing use of land within the village over time.

Figure 18: Important views within, towards and from the conservation area









V19



V20



V21



V22



V23



V24



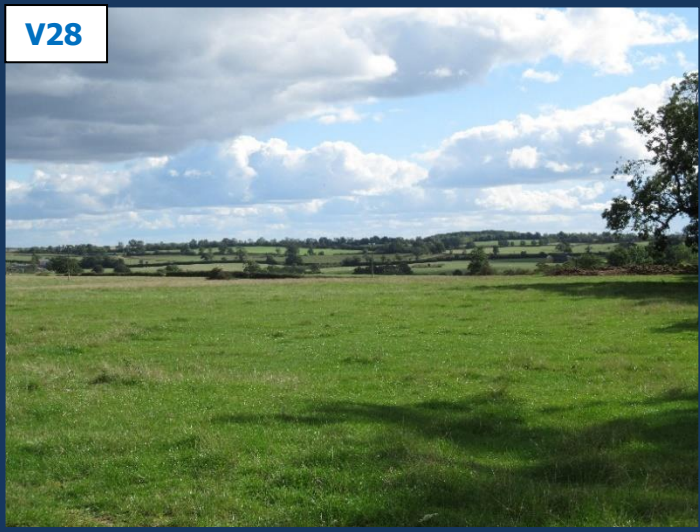
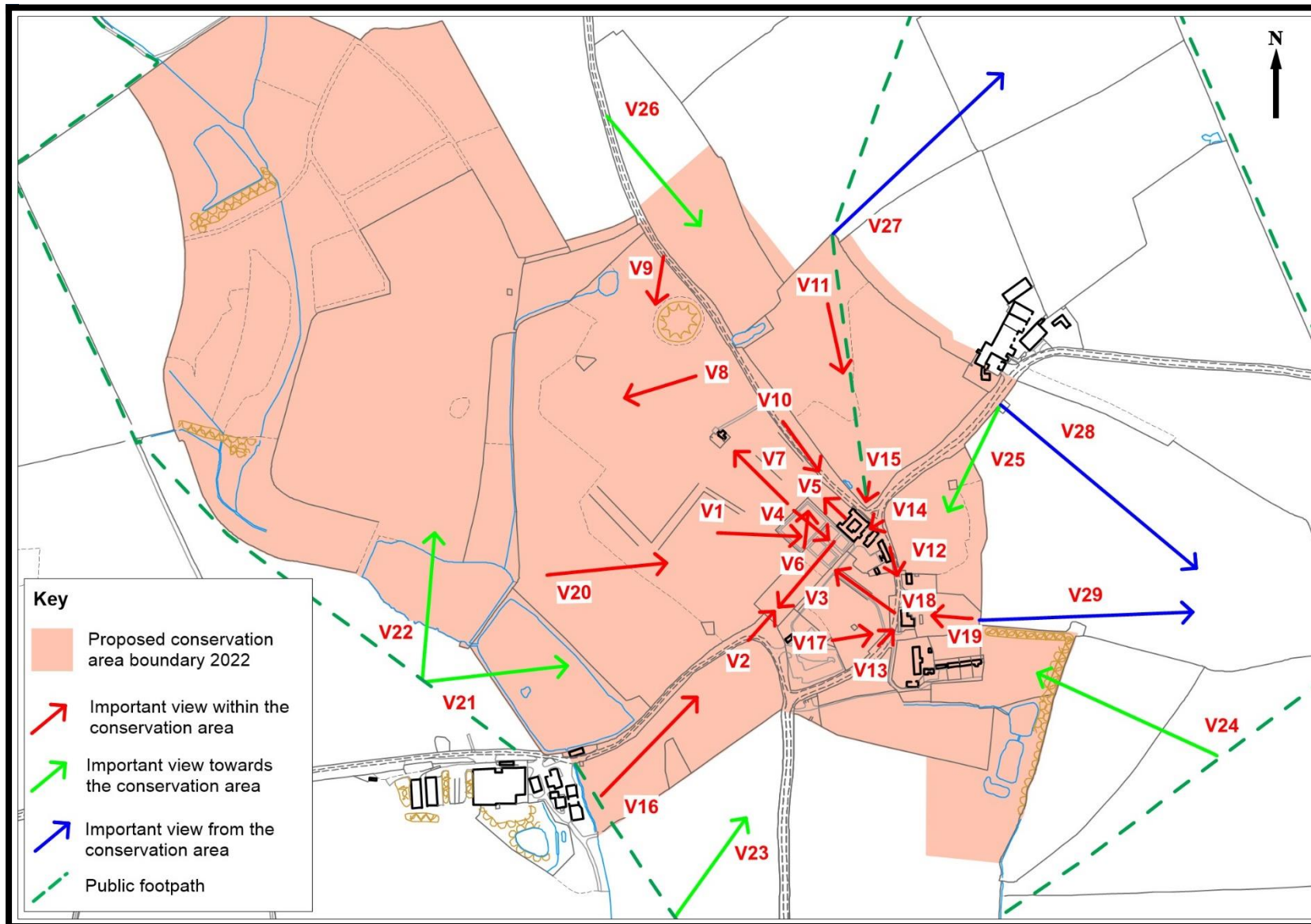


Figure 19: Map showing important views within, towards and from the conservation area



## 7.4 Open Space Analysis

Open space analysis is a method used to assess the contribution of open space to the character and appearance of the conservation area<sup>13</sup>.

The rural nature of the majority of the Daventry area is such that landscape often makes a significant contribution to the character and appearance of conservation areas within it.

In 2016, a methodology for analysing the contribution of landscape within Craven District was formulated by Historic England.<sup>14</sup> This methodology has been employed to assess the contribution of open spaces to the Canons Ashby Conservation Area.

Open space is defined as common land, farmland, countryside and recreational spaces (including school grounds, churchyards and cemeteries). The analysis considered open space inside and outside the conservation area boundary, where it formed its immediate context.

Fieldwork was combined with an analysis of historic mapping and other secondary sources.

From this, the following factors were taken into account in

assessing the contribution of open space to the character and appearance of the conservation area:

1. the historical relationship and function of open space
2. its contribution to the form and structure of historical settlements
3. how open space is experienced and viewed from within the boundary of the conservation area (for example, there are many long views from within conservation areas to the wider landscape that are fundamental to their character and appearance)
4. how the pattern of historic settlements and their relationship to the wider landscape can be understood when looking in from outside (and sometimes at considerable distance from hills and raised ground)

The following categories have been used to assess the contribution of open space to Canons Ashby Conservation Area and are mapped in Figure 21:

**Purple:** Open space that makes a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

**Pink:** Open space that makes a moderate contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

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<sup>13</sup> Alan Baxter Ltd (2016) Craven Conservation Areas Project: Potential Conservation Area Designations August 2016

<sup>14</sup>[https://www.cravendc.gov.uk/media/1818/craven\\_ca\\_appraisals\\_introduction\\_august\\_2016.pdf](https://www.cravendc.gov.uk/media/1818/craven_ca_appraisals_introduction_august_2016.pdf)

**Brown:** Open space that makes no or negligible contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Areas of open space that make a significant contribution to the setting of the conservation area may not necessarily be located within its boundary. In some instances, this contrasts with other open spaces that also make a significant contribution and are within the conservation area. This is because these spaces also contain features that contribute to the conservation area's historic character in addition to its setting.

Areas adjacent to the conservation area boundary that are either inaccessible or not visible from a public space at the time of the appraisal have not been included in the Open Space Analysis. This does not preclude the possibility that they make a positive contribution to the setting and/or character of the conservation area.

### **OS1: Enclosed pasture (Parkers Close and New Piece) on the east side of the Preston Capes Road**

This area of pasture makes a **significant** contribution to the character and setting of the conservation area. Much of the area contains earthworks of the shrunken medieval settlement and is part of the larger scheduled monument designation. The most northerly quarter of OS1 has ridge and furrow earthworks within it and is outside the scheduled area. The earthworks within OS1 make an important contribution to knowledge of how the settlement has developed over time. In the southeast third of the open space there

are a number of trees, which gives it a parkland character. There are views into this open space and of the archaeological earthworks from the Preston Capes road which highlight the rural character of the conservation area and the age of the village (see Section 7.3, View 26). The earthworks can also be viewed when walking across the southern part of the open space (View 11) on the public footpath EG8, which also adds to the amenity of the conservation area.

### **OS2 and OS3: Enclosed pasture on the east side of Preston Capes Road**

These two pasture fields make a **significant** contribution to the character and setting of the conservation area. They contain ridge and furrow earthworks and, as such, provide evidence of past land use in relation to the medieval settlement, which lay immediately to the west. The public footpath EG8 travels through OS2 and enables long views to the surrounding countryside, highlighting the remote location of the village (see Section 7.3, View 27). As an open space, OS2 and OS3 contribute to the peaceful character of the conservation area and highlight its rural setting.

### **OS4: Large area of pasture east and south of the Adstone road**

This area of pasture makes a **significant** contribution to the character and setting of the conservation area. The open nature of this land enables important views across it from the Adstone road. The first is of the tower of St. Mary's Church, a landmark building within the village and the surrounding countryside. The second is the long view to the rolling countryside beyond the village (see Section 7.3 Views 25 and 28). This area of pasture also forms the

immediate setting of several other heritage designations in addition to the conservation area; the Grade I listed church to its west and part of the scheduled monument to its west and south.

#### **OS5: An area of pasture east of Hill View Cottages**

This area of pasture makes a **significant** contribution to the character and setting of the conservation area. Its open character enables views of the church tower and other buildings in the village from footpath EG4 (see Section 7.3, View 24). As well as forming the immediate setting of the conservation area it also contributes to the peaceful, rural setting of the scheduled monument.

#### **OS6: Three areas of pasture to the south of Hill View Cottages**

Three areas of pasture that make a **significant** contribution to the character and setting of the conservation area. They contribute to the peaceful, rural atmosphere of the village on its south side. Parts of the north third of this area are included within the Registered Park and Garden and the scheduled monument designations for the earthwork remains of the 16<sup>th</sup> century garden. The open space is, therefore, also of importance to the setting of both designated heritage assets in addition to the conservation area. Footpath EG4 crosses the southern enclosure and adds to the amenity of the area.

Figure 20: Looking east across the earthworks of the 16<sup>th</sup> century garden within OS6



#### **OS7: An area of pasture to the southwest of South West Farm**

An area of pasture that makes a **significant** contribution to the character and setting of the conservation area. The open space enables views from footpath EG1 back towards the village, the parkland of Canons Ashby House and the church tower, which highlights the verdant character of the conservation area (see Section 7.3, View 23). Through a gap in the tree cover there are also glimpses of the ridge and furrow earthworks within the park. This area of pasture also contributes to the peaceful, rural

character of the conservation area and enhances the setting of the Registered Park and Garden.

**OS8: An area of pasture north of South West Farm**

An area of pasture that makes a **significant** contribution to the character and setting of the conservation area. The open character of the land and its elevated position enable important views from footpath EG2 which highlight the spatial relationship between the fishponds, parkland, the house and the church (see Section 7.3, View 21). The agricultural land use contributes to the serene character of the conservation area and the registered park and garden.

**OS9: An area of parkland under permanent pasture within the registered park and garden**

An area of pasture that makes a **significant** contribution to the character and setting of the conservation area. The pasture is surrounded almost entirely by woodland but there are views into this open space from footpath EG2 (see Section 7.3, View 22). The pasture forms the backdrop to this view across the lake and contributes to the peaceful atmosphere of the conservation area. Within this area of pasture there are ridge and furrow earthworks relating to the former open field system of agriculture that existed prior to the emparkment. It lies within the Registered Park and Garden.

**OS10: An area of parkland between the Preston Capes road and the lakes to the west**

An area of parkland under permanent pasture that makes a **significant** contribution to the character and setting of the conservation area. This area is part of the designated registered park and garden and the scheduled monument. There are numerous important views within, through and from the parkland that incorporate archaeological earthworks of the medieval castle motte, ridge and furrow cultivation and hollow ways relating to the medieval settlement to the northeast and give a sense of the changing use of the landscape and the time depth of the conservation area. A variety of individual trees and several avenues of trees give this open space its parkland character (see Figure 17). The open nature of the parkland enables views of Canons Ashby House and long views out to the surrounding countryside, particularly to the southwest, which highlights the rural setting of the conservation area (see Section 7.3, Views 7, 8, 9 and 20).

**OS11: The orchard south of the Adstone road**

The orchard makes a **significant** contribution to the character of the conservation area. This area lies within the scheduled monument designation. Earthworks within this area may be related to the medieval settlement, which lies immediately to the north on the opposite side of the Adstone road, and there is potential for further buried archaeological deposits as suggested historic OS maps evidence showing post-medieval buildings. A stone-built well house, probably of 16<sup>th</sup> century date, which is Grade II listed, stands towards the north end of the area. There has been replanting of orchard trees in the southern third of the space, which



contributes to the rural setting of the Grade II listed Church Cottage and Grade I listed St. Mary's Church to the south and Canons Ashby House (Grade I listed) to the west.

#### **OS12: Open space to the rear of St. Mary's Church**

A small open space, which includes the churchyard, that makes a **significant** contribution to the character and setting of the conservation area. In addition to the churchyard, the open space immediately to its east has within it the archaeological remains of the priory church and it lies within the area of the scheduled monument. Footpaths through this space lead to the east where views look past the 16<sup>th</sup> century walled garden wall and out to the countryside (see Section 7.3, V29), thus reinforcing the rural setting of the conservation area. Being immediately east of the rear of the church, the space also contributes to the setting of the listed building.

#### **OS13: Open space between Canons Ashby House and St. Mary's Church (Sehego Nob)**

A paddock known as Sehego Nob on the south side of Canons Ashby House that makes a **significant** contribution to the character and setting of the conservation area. The paddock lies within the registered park and garden designation and the area of the scheduled monument. There are views through this area of both Church Cottage and St. Mary's Church, which highlight the loose-knit character of the village (see Section 7.3, View 17). Within the paddock stands a stone barn. As a vernacular building it is typical of the rural character of this working estate, being built from ironstone, with a slate roof, a timber plank door and timber lintels above the window openings. Also within the paddock there is an avenue of trees that channels views towards a gated entrance into

the formal gardens of Canons Ashby House (View 18), demonstrating elements of the designed landscape and the status of Canons Ashby House within the village. The space contributes to the setting of these Grade I and II listed buildings. It also provides a peaceful, rural atmosphere in the centre of the village. Footpaths leading through the open space add amenity value.

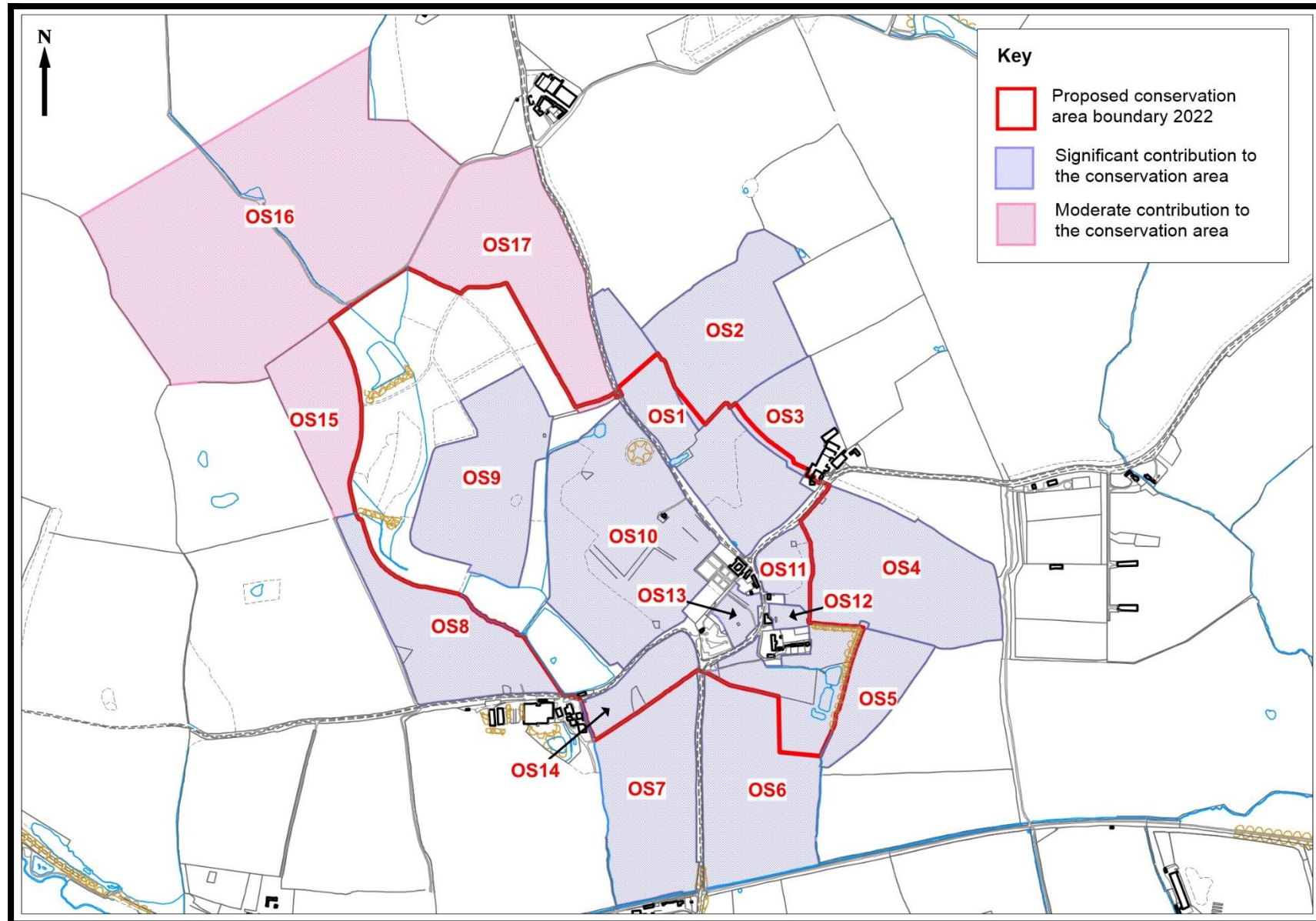
#### **OS14: Enclosed pasture (Lower Sehego) south of the Eydon road**

An area of pasture known as Lower Sehego that makes a **significant** contribution to the character and setting of the conservation area. Much of this area is within the Registered Park and Garden. The open space enables views northeast from footpath EG1 towards the Lion Gates with Canons Ashby House beyond, as well as the tower of St. Mary's Church emerging from the tree line (see Section 7.3, View 16). A recently planted avenue of trees gives this area its character of a designed landscape.

#### **OS15, 16 and 17: Three arable fields to the northwest of the conservation area**

Three arable fields bordering the wooded northwest part of the conservation area that make a **moderate** contribution to the character and setting of the conservation area. They enhance the rural and peaceful character of the conservation area and are experienced as the conservation area is approached along the Preston Capes road and as footpath EG2 is traversed. The rural character of these spaces in the immediate vicinity of the conservation area boundary extends outwards into the wider countryside.

Figure 21: Map showing the open space analysis for Canons Ashby



## 7.5 Public Realm and Other Features of Value

The public realm can be defined as the space around and between buildings that are publicly accessible, including streets and open spaces. In addition to the public realm having the potential to contribute to the character, appearance and amenity of the conservation area, it often includes specific features that also make a contribution and should be retained. Positive aspects of the public realm and features of value within the Canons Ashby Conservation Area include the following:

- The wall-mounted letter box opposite the church which carries the letters 'GR' signifying that it dates to the reign of King George V (1910-1936)
- The small triangular green at the junction of the Banbury and Preston Capes roads, and wide grass roadside verges throughout much of the conservation area which contribute to the rural character of the village (see Figure 17)
- There are few road signs, telegraph poles and an absence of street lighting columns, which keeps street clutter to a minimum and enhances the rural character of Canons Ashby
- There are no pavements within the village, which enhances its rural character.
- The golden gravelled surfaces to paths and courtyards around Canons Ashby House and its ancillary buildings and the cobbled edges to courtyards, entrances and paths.



Figures 22-24 clockwise from top left: King George V letter box; triangular grass verge at junction; golden gravel and cobbled surfaces

## 8 Architectural Character

Architectural form is a key aspect of the character and appearance of the conservation area. Set out below is a summary of building types and materials; including the characteristics of the form of the built environment within the conservation area; and pictorial examples of common materials, form and detailing, set out in the “palette” in Section 8.4.

### 8.1 Building Types and Materials

Canons Ashby’s buildings date largely to between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, with the exception of the Church of St. Mary which was first built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

Apart from Canons Ashby House and the church, most other buildings within the conservation area are in domestic use and are of vernacular character. These buildings are constructed from squared ironstone or ironstone rubble and the consistent use of this material gives the conservation area its coherent character. The use of brick is minimal, but it is conspicuous in the northeast façade of Canons Ashby House, which is largely constructed from dark red and burned brick (see Section 8.5, image J) and which is one of the earliest examples of the use of brick in Northamptonshire<sup>15</sup>. The brick façade is a prominent feature as the conservation area is approached along the Preston Capes road and Banbury Road. Elsewhere, the use of brick is restricted to a small outbuilding

adjacent to the Eydon Road and the chimneys of Church Cottage, The Woodyard and Hill View Cottages.

Most of the existing cottages appear originally to have been built for the Canons Ashby estate and this is evident from some of the architectural detailing such as the stone arched lintels above doors and windows at Hill View Cottages and South West Farm. They can also be seen at Church Cottage, although the door and window openings were subsequently altered to take stone mullion windows and door surrounds with four-point arches. These alterations are attributed to Henry Dryden (1863).

Most of the domestic buildings in the conservation area date to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which accounts for the lack of thatch to be seen in the village. Roofing materials within the conservation area are either slates or clay tiles. Two buildings, the former stables at Canons Ashby House and Park Cottage, have roofs with decorative patterns created by using fish scale roof tiles (see Section 8.5, image K). Other decorative architectural features include stone coped gables and kneelers, for example at Lodge Farmhouse and Church Cottage (See Section 8.5, photograph M).

There are several examples of former outbuildings that have been converted to new uses, for example the former coach house to Canons Ashby House now houses the National Trust shop. Across the courtyard, the stables have been converted into a café. Both buildings retain their original plan form and some of their original

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<sup>15</sup> MOLA (2017), Historic Building Recording at Canons Ashby House

openings, for example the wide arched doorway into the former coach house. Retention of these original features contributes to an understanding of their history and former uses.

The Woodyard on Banbury Road is a former barn that has retained its large arched, central doorway as a large window. The original windows, a series of small, narrow openings, have also been retained, thus preserving its character as a former agricultural building. Within the parkland, Park Cottage has retained its distinctive tower-like structure with pointed roof from its previous use as a deer larder.

Figure 25: The Woodyard, Banbury Road



Figure 26: Park Cottage, a converted former deer larder



Figure 27: The Coach House (now National Trust shop and toilet facilities)



Canons Ashby House itself is a high-status building constructed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century with later additions in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, which resulted in plan form developing into four ranges around a central courtyard. Built largely from the characteristic ironstone with limestone dressings, it also uses brick, as mentioned previously, and the northwest elevation and the tower in the southwest elevation are rendered. Neither brick nor render is used widely within the conservation area. As expected, the house displays many examples of architectural detailing that reflect its status. There are many examples of stone mullion and transom windows with leaded lights (see Section 8.5, image C), some with stone hood moulds, and in the southwest elevation there are 12-pane timber sashes with plain surrounds and keystones (see Section 8.5, image A). In the northeast and southeast elevations there are also canted bay windows.

From the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, the main entrance to the building was in the northwest elevation (see Figure 29). It has a ten-panelled double-leaf door within a moulded stone frame. This is flanked by Doric pilasters that support a plane frieze, an inflected cornice and a broken pediment. Within the pediment there is a lead cartouche.

On vernacular buildings within the conservation area, timber plank doors are the most common type and are often set within a stone surround with a four-centred arch or have a timber lintel above (see Section 8.5, image G).

Window types that are prevalent in the conservation area include stone mullion windows (see Section 8.5, image D), often with

leaded lights and sometimes with stone moulded hoods above. Timber casement windows are also used in vernacular buildings and can be seen at Hill View Cottages with arched stone lintels.

Figure 28: 18<sup>th</sup> century entrance in northwest elevation



## 8.2 Scale and Massing

With the exception of Canons Ashby House, St. Mary's Church and The Woodyard, the other buildings within the conservation area are modest in size. They are either of two storeys or one storey with the use of attic space to create an upper level. Several single-storey buildings exist but are limited to outbuildings, or two which have subsequently been converted for other uses, namely the former coach house and stables at Canons Ashby House. The house itself is largely of two storeys except for the northeast range, which has three storeys, and the tower, which is of four storeys.

St. Mary's Church and Canons Ashby House are on a much larger scale in terms of floor plan and height and the church, in particular, dominates the conservation area. In both cases this is also due to their proximity to the road, which makes them highly visible, in contrast to most other buildings which are screened by hedges and trees. Other buildings are set back with gardens separating them from the road frontage, South West Farm in Eydon Road being the only exception amongst the smaller buildings.

Most buildings tend to be situated in large plots and/or separated from neighbouring buildings by open spaces, giving the village its spacious and dispersed character. Except for Lodge Farm, buildings are located with their principal elevations fronting onto the highway.

Buildings within the conservation area are all detached except for the terrace known as Hill View Cottages.

Figure 29: Church Cottage



Figure 30: Hill View Cottages



### 8.3 Boundary Treatments

There are several types of boundary treatment within the conservation area that make a significant contribution to its character. These are mapped in Figure 37.

Tall, coped, stone walls are a feature of the conservation area, particularly those within the grounds of Canons Ashby House. They enclose the formal gardens, are constructed from coursed squared ironstone and are Grade II listed.

Figure 31: Listed walls within the grounds of Canons Ashby House



Another significant and substantial ironstone wall is that which forms the southern boundary with the area to the rear of the church. It is thought to be part of the 16<sup>th</sup> century walled garden associated with Sir John Cope's house. The wall is included in the description of the scheduled monument.

Figure 32: Wall of the 16<sup>th</sup> century walled garden



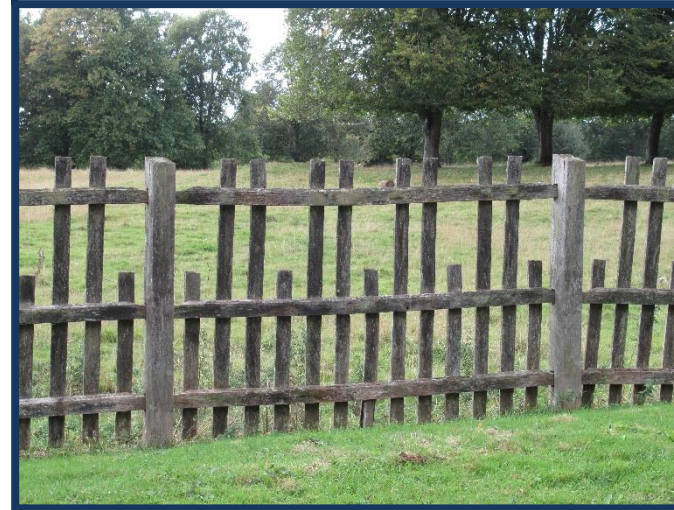
Elsewhere, walls are lower but nevertheless play an important part in creating a coherent grouping of ironstone buildings. This is particularly the case in the area of the church where walls either side of the road are constructed from ironstone.



Figure 33: Ironstone wall on the west side of Banbury Road through the centre of Canons Ashby



Figure 34: Timber deer park fencing



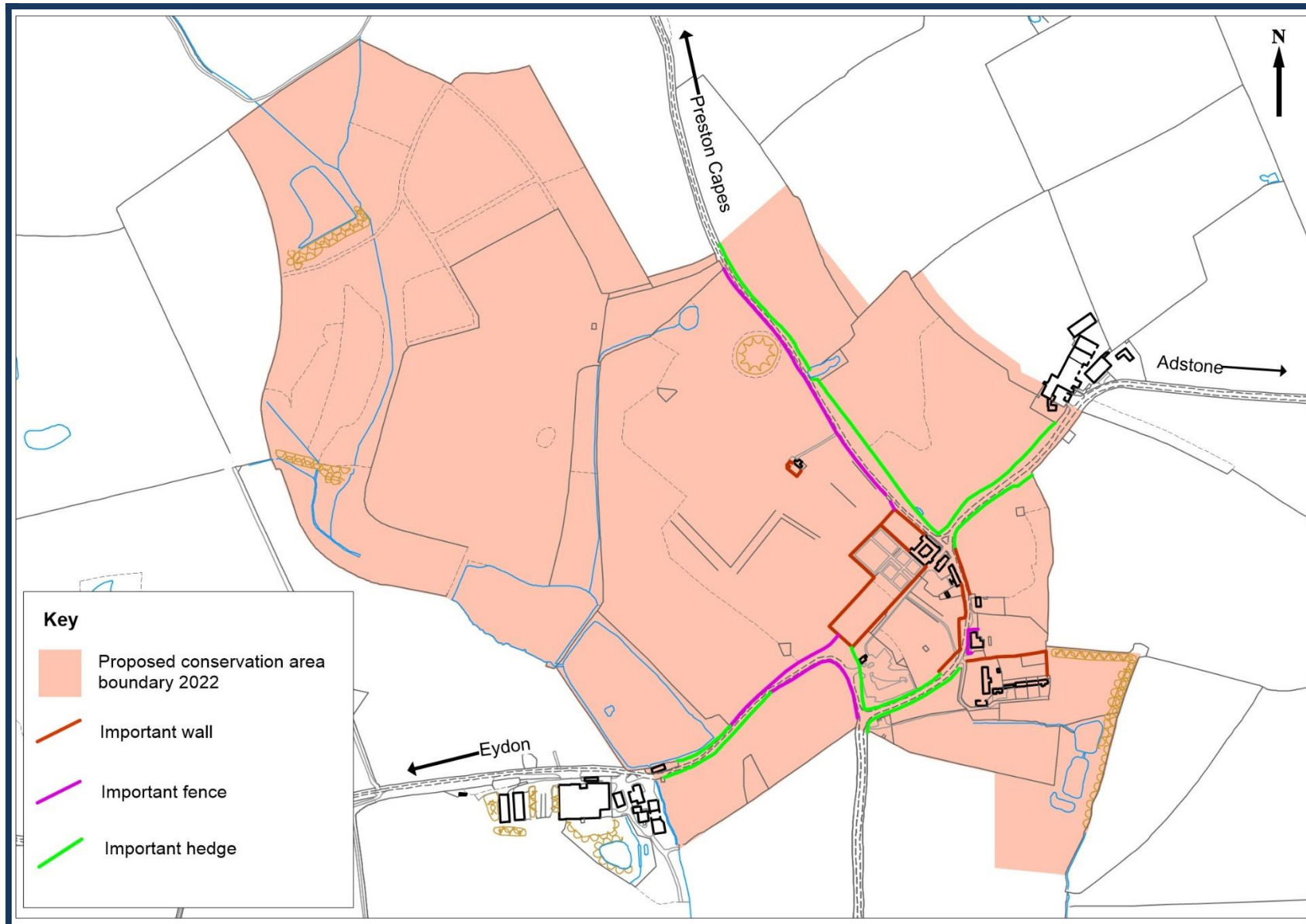
Several boundary treatments contribute to the parkland character of the conservation area and take the form of timber deer park fencing, which forms the east and south boundaries of the park; and metal estate fencing on the south side of the Eydon road and at the church.

Hedges also form several boundaries within the conservation area, particularly on the east side of the Preston Capes road, the north side of the Adstone road, and either side of parts of the Eydon road. They soften the built environment and enhance the rural character of the village.

Figure 35: Metal estate fencing

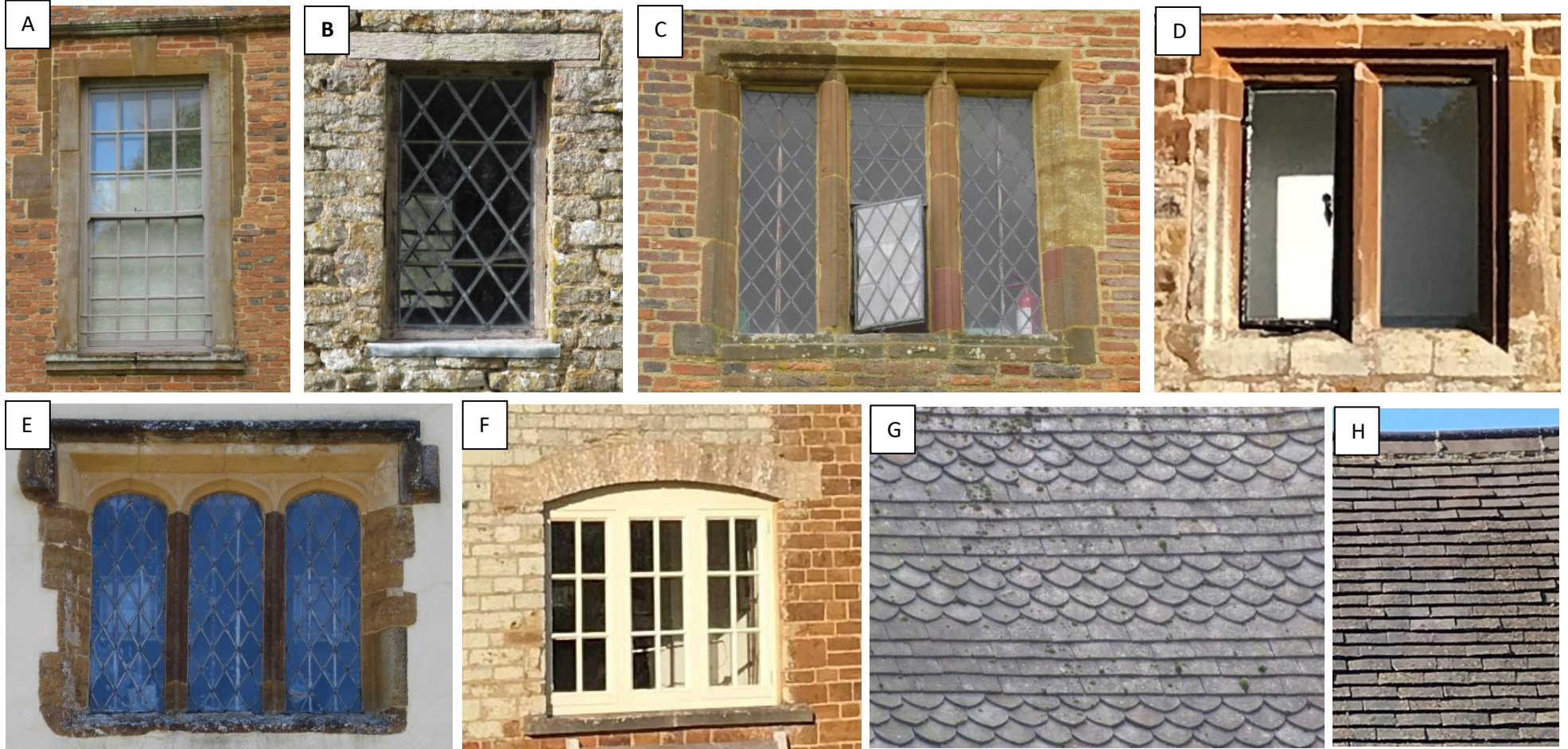


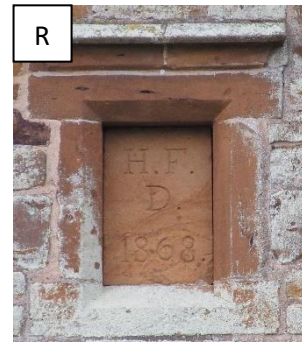
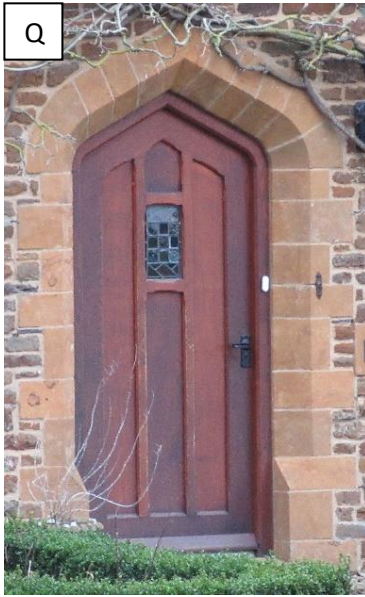
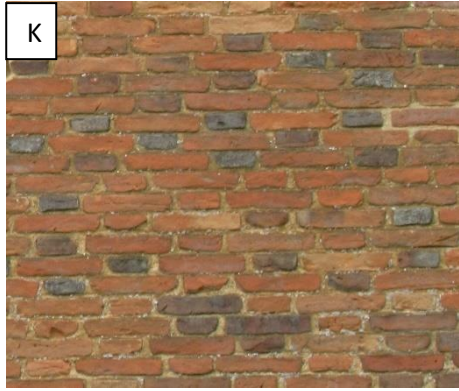
Figure 36: Important boundary treatments in the conservation area



## 8.4 Palette

Figure 37: A selection of images showing typical materials, surfaces, boundary treatments and fixtures which form a representative palette within the Canons Ashby Conservation Area.





## 8.5 Loss of Character

Incremental alterations to historic buildings and the public realm, or larger scale development within a conservation area, can have a detrimental effect on its historic character and integrity.

In Canons Ashby Conservation Area there are some instances where alterations or developments have resulted in a loss of character.

There is an example where historic timber or metal window frames have been replaced with uPVC frames. This is detrimental to the visual appearance of historic buildings and the wider street scene because the style of windows is often not in keeping with the date of the building and uPVC windows have thick frames. Replacement with uPVC frames also equates to a loss of the building's historic fabric. This is also true of changes to lintels and sills.

Not only can the replacement of building fabric have a detrimental effect on historic character but additions to buildings can also have this effect. In Canons Ashby the addition of features such as satellite dishes and sky lights also detract from the historic character of individual buildings.

## 9 Design Guidance

Advice should always be sought from West Northamptonshire Council before commencing any works. The following policies set out key design principles. A Design Guide for Northamptonshire has been produced by CPRE which provides useful advice<sup>16</sup>.

### 9.1 Alterations and Extensions

There will be a presumption against proposals for alterations and extensions which adversely affect the character of the conservation area or its setting. Alterations and extensions should be sympathetic to the character of the building in terms of proportions, scale, materials, and detailing. New development, including extensions, should respect the appropriate pattern of historic plot formation.

### 9.2 Scale

Additions to existing buildings or new development will generally not exceed two storeys, and the ridge line should respect the ridge line of adjacent buildings.

Ridge lines are typically varied across the conservation area, and new development should seek to be sympathetic to this style. The open spaces within the conservation area that lie between buildings give it its dispersed settlement character. Development within these open spaces should be resisted.

In most cases, buildings are set back from the street frontage with their principal elevation facing the highway. New development should respect this and where possible reflect this aspect of the conservation area's spatial character.

New development should not impede important views through, from or towards the conservation area, including those of St. Mary's Church and Canons Ashby House.

### 9.3 Materials

A variety of materials, such as ironstone, limestone, red brick, Welsh slate and clay tiles greatly contribute to the area's character and development must be sensitively designed with this in mind.

Most properties within Canons Ashby Conservation Area are built using ironstone but the use of dark red brick also features. See Section 8.5, photographs G - L for examples of typical materials used within the conservation area.

The retention of cobbled areas at the entrances to Canons Ashby House and within the courtyard, as well as the use of golden gravel to surface paths, yards and the car park, enhances its historic character. These materials should be used to maintain existing, and surface new paths, yards and parking areas.

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<sup>16</sup> Northamptonshire Countryside Design Guide (CPRE) [Publications | CPRE Northants](#)

Rendering and painting of external walls can detract from the visual amenity and uniformity of the street scenes and should be avoided. Exterior walls should not be clad, painted or rendered.

Masonry paints are often not acceptable for use on buildings which pre-date 1919 as they can have a damaging effect on stone and brickwork. In these cases it is more appropriate to use a lime-based render or lime wash.

Pointing on historic buildings should be subservient and done using an appropriate grade of lime mortar, avoiding ribbon or strap style.

#### **9.4 Detailing**

Some of the vernacular historic buildings in Canons Ashby have arched stone lintels above windows and doors (see Section 8.5, photograph F). Other buildings have flat timber lintels above windows (photograph B), although they are not common. They can be seen in several agricultural and outbuildings associated with Canons Ashby House and above windows in the Pebble Courtyard at the house itself. Flat stone lintels with key stones (Section 8.5, photograph A) can also be seen at Canons Ashby House. Stone hood moulding above windows is used at Church Cottage, Lodge Farm and Canons Ashby House. Several buildings also have stone kneelers and stone coping to the gables (Section 8.5, photograph M) and date stones on their front or side elevations (photographs R, S and T).

More elaborate detailing is usually reserved for the larger, higher status buildings. For example, Canons Ashby House has a stone

string course between the ground and first floors, decorative drain pipes and a cornice above the first floor.

The features mentioned above contribute to the character of Canons Ashby and should be retained. New development should use appropriate designs in order to be sympathetic to the existing form within the conservation area with the careful use of detailing according to status.

#### **9.5 Windows**

There is a variety of historic window styles within the conservation area but perhaps the most prevalent are stone mullion windows, often with leaded lights (Section 8.5, photographs C, D and E). At Canons Ashby House there are also examples of canted bay windows and Georgian timber sash windows (photograph A). Vernacular buildings tend to have timber casement windows with narrow glazing bars, either with timber lintels or arched stone lintels above (Section 8.4, photographs F).

These different styles enhance the historic character of the individual buildings and aid interpretation of the village's architectural development.

Traditional windows and window openings should be retained, maintained and repaired as far as possible. Dormer windows and roof lights are generally not acceptable on the front elevations of historic properties and if used on rear elevations should be designed so that they are in proportion with the building and do not dominate the roof slope. Roof lights should be fitted flush to the roof line.

If replacement of traditional windows is necessary, they should be:

- Sensitive to the original style
- Generally, either timber sash or metal or timber double casement
- If painted, window frames should be either white or where possible a relevant sensitive colour based on the originals
- Original brick, stone and timber lintels should be retained and every care taken not to damage them if the windows are being replaced and segmental arches should not be replaced with flat lintels
- If it is necessary to replace lintels, replacements should be like-for-like in terms of their design and materials
- UPVC is generally not an appropriate material for use in an historic property.

## 9.6 Doors and Porches

Traditional doors within the conservation area tend to be of timber plank style (Section 8.5, photograph G). Many have door surrounds with either stone or timber four-pointed arches, such as Church Cottage, Lodge Farm and The Woodyard (Section 8.5, photographs N and Q). Door openings with four-pointed arches can also be seen at Canons Ashby House but there are also two entrances created in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century in the northwest elevation and at the base of

the tower that have classical entablature, including moulded stone surrounds, Doric columns and broken pediments. The doors themselves are solid timber panelled doors (see Figure 10 above).

Former non-domestic buildings, such as The Woodyard and the coach house at Canons Ashby House have wide door openings with arched stone lintels. At The Woodyard this opening is now a large window. These openings add to the non-domestic character of the buildings and should be retained.

Porches are uncommon in the conservation area with just one example at South West Farm. It has a pitched, tiled roof and an arched doorway to match the limestone arched lintels above windows.

There will be a presumption against uPVC as a material for doors. Porches should not detract from or overwhelm the visual amenity of the relevant building elevation or the uniformity of the street scene, and be appropriately proportioned and scaled.

## 9.7 Roofing

Historic buildings within the conservation area have roofs either of Welsh slates or clay tiles (see Section 8.5, photographs G and H). Roofing at Park Cottage and the former stables at Canons Ashby House incorporate fish scale slates to create decorative patterns (photograph G). Welsh slate has a distinctive quality and finish. It has a matt surface and a muted grey colouring with blue and/or purple tones. Alternatives often have a darker grey/black colour and a shiny finish, which results in a very different appearance.



Traditional roofing materials such as Welsh slate and clay tiles should be retained wherever possible.

Ridgelines should be carefully designed so as not to obscure views of historic buildings or surrounding countryside. Modern development should seek to sit subservient to historic properties rather than dominating them.

### **9.8 Setting**

There will be a presumption against developments which negatively affect the setting of the conservation area, particularly if they affect views into, out of and through the conservation area.

The location of Canons Ashby towards the summit of a south-west facing slope provides long panoramic views particularly to the southwest and east, through the parkland to the surrounding countryside. It also enables views towards the conservation area in which the tower of St. Mary's Church is a prominent feature. These views are made possible by open spaces within the conservation area and the loose-knit settlement pattern.

Where possible, the open spaces that enable these views and those out to the wider rural setting of the village should be retained. Development, including visitor facilities such as parking areas and buildings, should not detract from the built form of the village or from both long and short views of key buildings, particularly St. Mary's Church and Canons Ashby House. The open space between the church and the house, known as Sehego Nob, is particularly important in this respect.

### **9.9 Trees**

The conservation area is well furnished with trees of differing varieties, including individual parkland trees, clumps, woodlands and those which form avenues leading to and from Canons Ashby House. They contribute to the amenity of the village and its rural character as well as the character of the parkland. Important trees should be replaced where felling takes place, so as to conserve the green setting and amenity of the conservation area and to maintain features of the designed landscape. Where replanting or new planting takes place regard should be given to the impact on both upstanding and buried archaeological remains. Professional advice should be sought and appropriate assessment undertaken to assess the extent and significance of any remains which may be affected. A large extent of the conservation area is designated as a scheduled monument and because tree planting involves below-ground excavation, it is likely that scheduled monument consent will be needed.

### **9.10 Public Realm**

The public realm should enhance the character of the conservation area. Signage and street furniture should not detract from the visual amenity of the street scape; their design should be sympathetic and number kept to a minimum in order to avoid clutter whilst properly taking account of public safety.

Public realm features that make a positive contribution to the character and amenity of the conservation area should be maintained. In Canons Ashby this includes the wall-mounted

letterbox in Banbury Road. Minimal signage within the village is also a positive characteristic that should be maintained.

Satellite dishes should not be placed on the principal elevations of buildings, as they serve to detract from the visual amenity of the conservation area. Furthermore, external wiring should not be taken across the frontage of a building; or, where unavoidable, should be consolidated and kept tidy so as not to affect the visual amenity of the building or streetscape.

Any new development should seek to ensure that measures are taken so that large waste bins are not visible to the street, including back land.

There are wide grass verges and no pavements throughout much of the conservation area. Most of the verges are not delineated by kerb stones, which gives them an informal character and this contributes to the rural character of the village. Formalising the edges of grass verges with kerb stones or introducing pavements should be resisted.

Paths and yard surfaces around Canons Ashby House and gardens should be maintained using cobbles and/or golden gravel and any repairs or construction of new paths should use these materials.

### **9.11 Development and Built Form**

Any future development should aim to enhance the character of the conservation area.

Any new built form should be concentrated within the existing village. It should balance current highway standards with the

historic character of the conservation area with regards to road widths, the number and widths of pavements, surfacing, street lighting and signage.

Unless there are opportunities for the sympathetic re-use of existing buildings, for example traditional/historic buildings, new development in the open countryside should be avoided. Should there be reuse of traditional/historic buildings, careful consideration must be given to issues such as vehicular and pedestrian access and the urbanising influence of highway requirements.

Any new built form should be small-scale and incorporate a mix of building types i.e. detached, semi-detached or terraced, to reflect the variety seen in Canons Ashby. Buildings and their layout should be designed in such a way as to create varied rooflines.

Future development should respect the plot size, layout and building alignments that characterise the particular part of the conservation area where development is proposed. For example, plots tend to be relatively small at Hill View Cottages in contrast to other residential buildings elsewhere in the conservation area. Infill development in the open spaces within the village, which form part of its rural, peaceful, and dispersed character, should be resisted.

Individual buildings should be designed to reflect the building materials and detailing evident within the conservation area, for example, stone hood moulding above windows, timber lintels or stone arched lintels; the use of ironstone for individual buildings; appropriately designed doors, door surrounds, windows and porches. Roof materials should closely match either Welsh slate or

clay roof tiles, which are the predominant roofing materials in the conservation area.

Development which involves below-ground excavation should have regard to the potential for remains of archaeological interest. Professional advice should be sought and appropriate assessment undertaken to assess the extent and significance of any remains which may be affected by proposals. A large extent of the conservation area is designated as a scheduled monument and development which involves below-ground excavation will need scheduled monument consent.

Further policy advice on development can be found in the [Settlements and Countryside Local Plan \(Part 2\) for Daventry District 2011-2029](#).

## 10 Opportunities for Enhancement

### 10.1 Local List

Certain buildings, structures and sites make a particularly positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area or its setting and are therefore worthy of recognition in the planning process.

In response to this, West Northamptonshire Council is producing a "Local List" of locally special buildings, structures or sites, which provides those assets included on the list with appropriate consideration. The Local List differs from statutory "Listed Buildings" in that an asset's inclusion on the Local List does not confer any further planning controls. Rather, being included on the Local List provides weight to the asset's retention, should it be at risk.

Local List candidates are judged by criteria assessing their age; condition and quality; rarity; group value; and historic associations.

Entries on the Local List within Canons Ashby are as follows:

**Lodge Farmhouse:** this is an 18<sup>th</sup> century building with an L-shaped plan (the north wing is probably a later addition to the original building). The building is constructed from squared ironstone with a roof of Welsh slates, with clay tiles used on the north wing. Lodge Farmhouse is a prominent building as the conservation area is entered from the direction of Adstone, being situated on its own and away from other buildings in the village. As

such, it sets the tone of the conservation area as one that has buildings of architectural quality. Lodge Farmhouse displays stone mullion windows with leaded lights, a doorway with a four-point arch and stone coped gables and kneelers.

**The Woodyard:** Constructed from materials characteristic of the conservation area, ironstone and slate, at particular times of the year The Woodyard is a prominent building as the village is entered from the direction of Moreton Pinkney. As it stands directly to the south of St. Mary's Church it forms an important part of the setting of the Grade I listed building. It is architecturally distinctive within the conservation area, being the only converted agricultural building, and is easily recognisable as such with what was a large, arched central doorway (now a window), and small window openings.

**Barn south of Canons Ashby House:** A small 19<sup>th</sup> century ironstone barn standing in the paddock to the south of Canons Ashby House. Due to its position, standing alone in the large paddock south of the house and west of St. Mary's Church, the barn is highly visible in the centre of the village from Banbury Road. It displays materials and designs for doors and windows that are typical of the local vernacular architecture and the rural character of the estate. The building makes a visual contribution to the grouping of historic buildings within the centre of the village, which also includes St. Mary's Church, Church Cottage, the boundary walls of the gardens of Canons Ashby House and the boundary wall of the paddock. It therefore contributes to the setting of these structures, three of which are statutory listed buildings.

**Park Cottage:** Park Cottage stands in the parkland of Canons Ashby House, approximately 130m northwest of the house. It was first built as a deer or game larder in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, being a tower-like structure with a distinctively-shaped pointed roof. Either side of the 'tower' there are single-storey projections with pitched roofs. It's not clear whether these are part of the original building or whether they were added in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Sir Henry Dryden extended the building and had it converted to a game keeper's dwelling, giving it its T-shaped plan. Park Cottage is a distinctive building that has had a clear connection with the running of the Canons Ashby estate and parkland throughout much of its history. The eye is drawn to the building by a line of trees that runs towards it from the gates into the formal gardens of the house. Built from ironstone and Welsh slate, materials typical of other buildings in Canons Ashby, Park Cottage contributes to the coherent character of the conservation area.

**Barn northwest of Park Cottage:** A small stone barn of 19<sup>th</sup> century date that is situated in the northwest area of parkland at Canons Ashby House. It is constructed from ironstone with a course of red bricks under the eaves and a clay tile roof. The barn stands in isolation in the northwest area of the park and it is similar in size and design to the barn that stands between Canons Ashby House and the church. It displays materials and designs for door and window openings that are typical of the local vernacular architecture and the rural character of the estate.

### Images of local list candidates

Figure 38: Lodge Farmhouse



Figure 39: The Woodyard



Figure 40: Barn south of Canons Ashby House



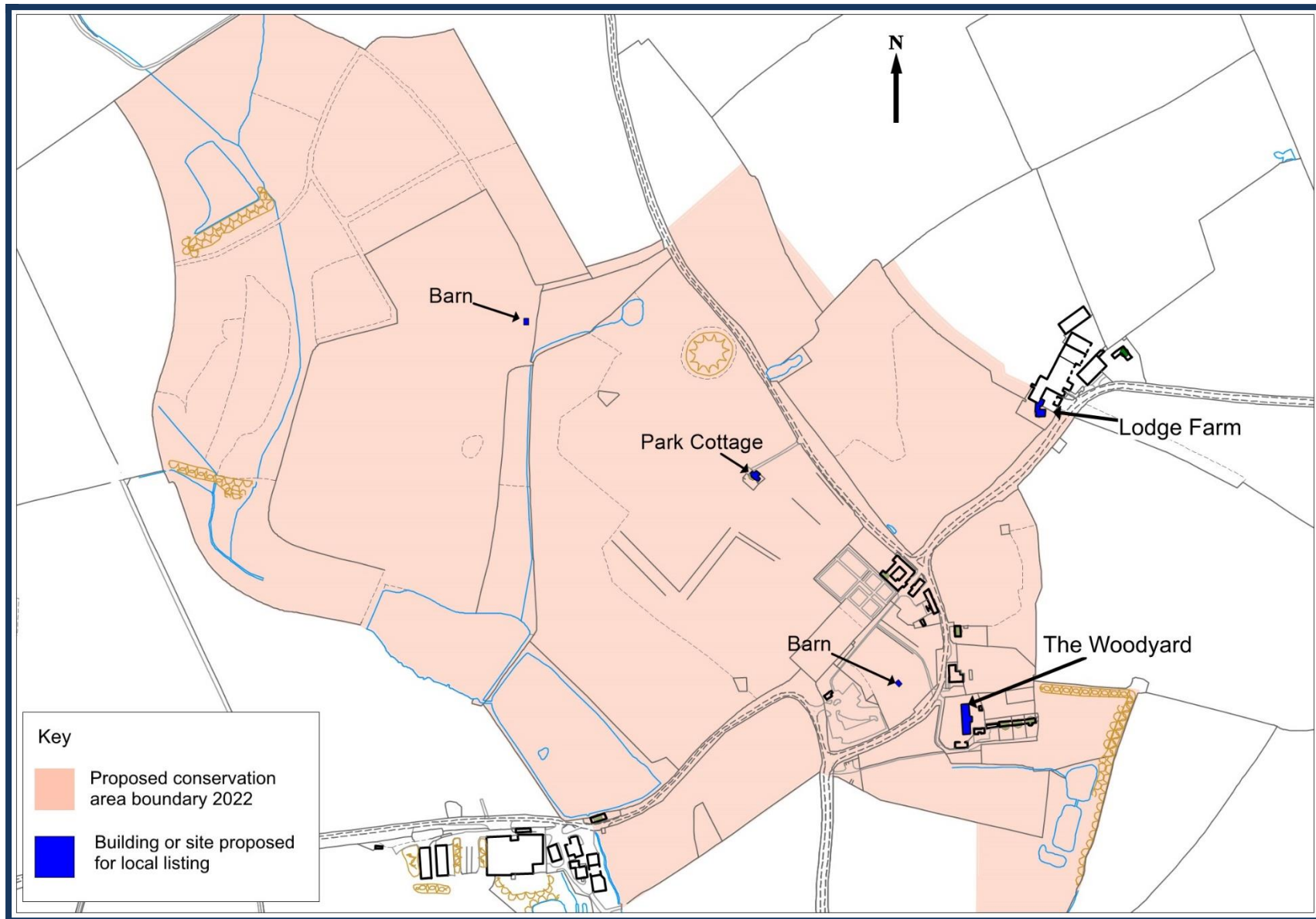
Figure 42: Barn northwest of Park Cottage



Figure 41: Park Cottage



Figure 43: Buildings proposed for local listing in Canons Ashby



## 10.2 Article 4 Directions

Certain “permitted development” rights are automatically withdrawn as the result of conservation area designation, meaning that planning permission is normally required to undertake particular works (see Section 2.3). However, many works, such as the replacement of windows, doors or the painting of the exterior of a property are not controlled through conservation area designation and remain permitted development. Over time, these works can have a significant effect on the character and appearance of a conservation area which may cause harm to its special interest. In order to preserve the character of a conservation area the council may choose to remove certain permitted development rights through the placement of an **Article 4(1) Direction**. The result of an Article 4(1) Direction is that permitted development rights are withdrawn and planning permission is required to undertake certain works.

The placement of an Article 4(1) Direction is a separate process to conservation area designation. Certain Article 4(1) Directions are being explored as the result of this appraisal and are detailed below.

Subject to the outcome of the consultation on this appraisal, detailed proposals will be prepared and further consultation, including directly with the properties concerned, will be undertaken.



<b>Permitted Development Rights to be withdrawn</b>	<b>Location</b>
<p>Alteration or replacement of windows and doors</p> <p>Construction, replacement or removal of porches or canopies</p> <p>Alterations to roofing material</p> <p>Addition of roof lights or skylights</p>	<p><u>Banbury Road</u> Lodge Farm, The Woodyard, 1-3 Hill View Cottages, Park Cottage</p> <p><u>Eydon Road</u> South West Farm</p>

### 10.3 Public Realm Enhancements

Specific aspects of the public realm within Canons Ashby currently detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area and would benefit from sensitive redesign in the future, if possible.

These are as follows:

- Although the number of telegraph poles and their overhead lines within the conservation area are minimal, they do detract from views of individual buildings and the street scene as a whole. Should the opportunity arise to replace them with below-ground transmission lines this would enhance the conservation area
- Some historic walls, in particular the stone wall that forms the boundary between Banbury Road and the paddock northeast of the National Trust carpark are partially covered with vegetation. This obscures them from view and could also be damaging to their fabric. Vegetation should be removed and further growth controlled so that the walls contribute to the historic character of the conservation area and their fabric is not damaged.
- A short section of the 16<sup>th</sup> century walled garden wall, which is visible from the open space behind the churchyard, has suffered some damage. The outer face has collapsed, exposing the interior rubble core. The damaged section should be repaired so that further collapse of the wall does not occur.
- Several properties have satellite dishes attached to their front elevations which detract from the historic character of the individual buildings and the street scene. Existing satellite dishes should be placed in a location that is not visible from the street frontage or removed if they are not in use. Should the

owner or occupier of a property wish to install a new satellite dish or antennae this will require permission.

Figure 44: Damage to 16<sup>th</sup> century wall



## 11 Management Plan

Local planning authorities have a duty placed on them under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation or enhancement of conservation areas.

Conservation area appraisals undertaken within the Daventry area help to identify threats to the character of the conservation area and opportunities for enhancement, which can then be developed into Management Plans which seek to address these issues through recommendations.

The following threats to the character and appearance of the Canons Ashby Conservation Area have been identified through the appraisal. Each Threat is accompanied by a Recommendation which should be used to guide future management and address key issues.

### 11.1 Threats and Recommendations

#### **Threat 1: Inappropriate development**

Piecemeal and large-scale development, both on the fringes of the village as well as within the conservation area boundary, has the potential to harm the character of the conservation area as well as its setting. Development has led to the erosion of some historic character (see Section 8.5 – Loss of Character), the gradual effect

of which is a threat to the general character and appearance of the conservation area.

**Recommendation 1:** Development proposals should have regard to the established form, scale, design and materials used within the conservation area as highlighted in this appraisal and other planning documents. Development should preserve and enhance the character of the local vernacular.

Open spaces within the village help to create its dispersed settlement pattern and infilling in these spaces should be avoided.

Loss of walling, fencing and hedges that have been identified as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area should be avoided.

There are important long, panoramic views of the rural landscape from within the landscape park and gardens of Canons Ashby House, from the open space to the east of St. Mary's Church, and from Banbury Road. Views along Canons Ashby' lanes are also an important contributor to the historic character of the village. Development that interrupts or detracts from these views would be detrimental to the character and amenity of the conservation area and should be resisted.

#### **Threat 2: Threat to the character and appearance of the conservation area through the loss of traditional features of value**

The character of Canons Ashby is greatly enhanced by the presence of traditional architecture and the survival and maintenance of historic features of value, such as historic open spaces and

vernacular buildings, which directly contribute to its historic interest and significance. A review of the village has identified some threats to traditional features and historic fabric, such as the replacement of traditional fenestration with modern UPVC counterparts (see Section 8.5). The piecemeal loss of traditional features that contribute to the historic or architectural interest of the conservation area forms a threat to its overall character and appearance and should be discouraged.

Individual buildings and structures that make a positive contribution through their architectural or social value are also at risk from gradual or wholesale loss. These buildings and structures may be deemed non-designated heritage assets (neither listed nor scheduled); the loss of these assets forms a significant threat to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

**Recommendation 2:** Development proposals should have regard to the design principles set out in Section 9 of this document in order to preserve the architectural interest of the conservation area. Through the appraisal process, the council will explore the use of Article 4(1) Directions which remove permitted development rights, in order to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. See Section 10.2 of the Appraisal for more details.

Work to listed buildings will require consent in most cases.

Heritage assets which make a particular contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area will be recognised through the Local List. Recognising the contribution

made by these assets allows them to be appropriately preserved and re-used, securing their long-term future. The council will seek to adopt and maintain a Local List of local special buildings and structures for Canons Ashby. Once adopted a Local List becomes a material consideration in the determination of planning decisions. See Section 10.1 of the Appraisal for more details.

### **Threat 3: Impact on Trees**

Trees make an important contribution to the rural and historic character of Canons Ashby. Individual trees, clumps, avenues and woodlands perform an important role in creating the character of the historic parkland and the gardens of Canons Ashby House. They form an important aspect of views within and towards the conservation area, helping to soften views of the built environment. Avenues of trees within the parkland channel views towards the house, St. Mary's Church and Park Cottage. They are important for the biodiversity of the area.

There are currently no individual tree preservation orders or tree preservation order areas within the conservation area. Inappropriate or incremental loss of individual trees or groups of trees risks harming the historic, parkland character of the conservation area and its setting, and having a damaging impact on the biodiversity of the area.

**Recommendation 3:** Under Section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 permissions are required to carry out works to trees over a certain size within a conservation area. This includes topping, lopping, pruning and felling.

Regard should be given to the contribution made by trees throughout the conservation area. In particular for the contribution they make to the historic interest of the conservation area through their use in the designed landscape park and garden, their ecological and amenity value, and their effect on its setting. Should individual trees or groups of trees be lost, they should be replaced. New planting should use appropriate species and respect historically significant planting positions and schemes.

#### **Threat 4: Impact on archaeology**

Canons Ashby has been inhabited for many centuries. It is recognised that evidence for past occupation survives as both extant and buried archaeological remains within the modern settlement and on its fringes (see Section 7.2).

In addition to the medieval settlement earthworks, archaeological remains of the medieval priory and the archaeological site of the 16<sup>th</sup> century gardens, the area has the potential to yield further archaeology which would enhance our understanding of its development and the development of the wider landscape. A large part of the area is designated as a scheduled monument (National Heritage List for England UID 1015534).

Damage to archaeological earthworks could be caused by allowing livestock to graze in those areas where earthworks exist. Livestock can cause the loss of grass cover and/or trampling which leads to erosion, damage and disfigurement to archaeological earthworks and an irreversible loss of the resource and the information it holds.

Planting of new trees risks damaging archaeological earthworks and below-ground archaeological deposits.

Development proposals have the potential to have a detrimental impact on archaeological remains, which also forms a threat to the historic interest and subsequent character and appearance of the conservation area.

**Recommendation 4:** Archaeological earthworks should be monitored regularly for signs of erosion. Where erosion is taking place, livestock should be removed to allow grass to regenerate. Larger erosion scars will need careful repair with turves or soil but archaeological advice should be sought prior to repairs being undertaken. The impact of livestock can be minimised by re-siting water troughs and regularly moving mobile feeders, adjusting stock levels in sensitive areas, and removing livestock from these areas during wet conditions.

Where replanting or new planting of trees takes place regard should be given to the impact on both upstanding and buried archaeological remains. Professional advice should be sought and appropriate assessment undertaken to assess the extent and significance of any remains which may be affected.

Development which involves below-ground excavation should have regard to the potential for remains of archaeological interest. Professional advice should be sought and appropriate assessment undertaken to assess the extent and significance of any remains which may be affected by proposals.

Any works within the area of the Scheduled Monument will require Scheduled Monument Consent. Failure to gain consent prior to development could lead to criminal prosecution.

### **Threat 5: Highways**

The potential loss of historic fabric, introduction of modern surfacing, boundary treatments and signage, and delineating verges and green spaces with kerbs, as the result of highways development forms a threat to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Development that involves alterations to highways, footways and signage can have a dramatic impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The nature of narrow and secluded lanes and street pattern, often lined with hedgerows or stone walls, forms an important aspect of the special interest of the conservation area. Historic and traditional materials make a special contribution to this character and can easily be lost.

Furthermore, future development proposals could lead to an increase in traffic which could have a significant effect on the quiet and peaceful character of the conservation area, as well as the physical fabric of buildings and structures that lie close to the highway.

**Recommendation 5:** The highways authority, Northamptonshire Highways, should as far as possible, seek to ensure that works to highways and footways do not negatively detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The introduction of kerb stones between the edge of verges and the highway would result in a loss to the rural character of the conservation area and should be resisted.

Development proposals should have regard to the impact of modern highways standards, traffic levels, signage and parking provision on the historic environment.

### **Threat 6: Public Realm**

The condition of the public realm has a great effect on the quality of the conservation area. Poor maintenance of the public realm, and street clutter, could detract from the character of the conservation area. Areas of the public realm which currently detract from the appearance of the area and are therefore a threat to its character have been identified in Section 10.3.

**Recommendation 6:** Street furniture within the conservation area is minimal. Where possible street furniture should be consolidated and kept to a minimum in order to prevent cluttering of the street space. Street furniture should be maintained to a high standard by all stakeholders. Good design of new street furniture or that which is being replaced should be encouraged to enhance the conservation area.

Proposals should take the opportunity to enhance areas identified as detracting from the character and appearance of the conservation area at Section 10.3 by using designs and materials appropriate to the historic character and appearance of the conservation area.

### **Threat 7: Impact of Visitors**

The function of Canons Ashby House as a visitor attraction creates several potential threats to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Excessive numbers of visitors could cause physical damage to the fabric of historic buildings and spaces that are publicly accessible, and visitor infrastructure such as pathways. This, in turn, could damage the significance and visual amenity of the conservation area.

On busy days the open space between Canons Ashby House and the church (Sehego Nob) is used as an overflow car park. This space forms part of the scheduled monument. Its use for parking risks damaging archaeological earthworks and below-ground deposits. Furthermore, this open space forms the immediate setting of the Grade I listed St. Mary's Church and Canons Ashby House and its gardens. Development of this area to form permanent parking provision would harm the setting of the listed buildings and the character of the conservation area as well as damaging the scheduled monument.

The requirement for visitor facilities such as a shop, toilets and cafe could result in the re-use of historic buildings in a way that was unsympathetic to the character of the conservation area and/or harm to the historic fabric or features of buildings. New buildings for visitor facilities could damage the visual amenity, historic character and setting of the conservation area and other heritage assets were they not to be designed using the appropriate materials, siting and scale (see Section 8.4 – Palette and Section 9 – Design Guidance).

**Recommendation 7:** A balance must be struck between the need to attract visitors to Canons Ashby and making the site accessible in a way that allows them to interact with its heritage without harming the character and special interest of the area.

Where possible, alternative over-flow parking provision should be sought outside of the area of the scheduled monument. Permanent extension of the car park into the open space known as Sehego Nob should be resisted.

Pedestrian routes should be well-maintained and any repairs should use appropriate materials. Should the creation of new routes be considered, regard should be given to the physical impact their construction and use will have on buildings, archaeological sites and the natural environment. They should be designed and sited so they do not have a negative impact on the visual amenity of the conservation area.

Visitor orientation signage and interpretive panels should be kept to a minimum and positioned carefully to ensure they are not visually intrusive.

Should existing historic buildings be re-used and converted for visitor facilities, any development should ensure buildings maintain their historic character through the retention of historic features and building fabric and the use of appropriate materials.

## Sources

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Royal Commission for Historic Monuments (1981) An Inventory of Historical Monuments in the County of Northampton, Vol. III: Archaeological Sites in North-West Northamptonshire, Her Majesty's Stationary Office: London.

## Internet Sources

[Magic Map Application \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://defra.gov.uk)

[Home | Domesday Book \(opendomesday.org\)](https://opendomesday.org)

[Northamptonshire's Environmental Character & Green Infrastructure Suite \(rnrpenvironmentalcharacter.org.uk\)](https://rnrpenvironmentalcharacter.org.uk)

[Canons Ashby - Daventry - Parks & Gardens \(parksandgardens.org\)](https://parksandgardens.org)

[Canons Ashby | National Trust](https://nationaltrust.org.uk)

## Further Information and Contact Details

Information regarding conservation areas can be found on our website at:

[Conservation areas | West Northamptonshire Council \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](https://westnorthants.gov.uk)



Information regarding local history can be found at the Northamptonshire Record Office or Northamptonshire Libraries.

For advice relating to development within conservation areas, please contact the council's Development Management department via

Email: [planning.ddc@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:planning.ddc@westnorthants.gov.uk) or

Telephone: 0300 126 7000.


Information and advice for those living and working within conservation areas can also be found on the Historic England website at:



[Living in a Conservation Area | Historic England](#)



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**Appendix A: Listed Buildings, Registered Park and Garden and Scheduled Monuments**

List Entry Number	Name	Grade	National Heritage for England web page	Image
1075304	Canons Ashby House	I	<a href="#">CANONS ASHBY HOUSE, Canons Ashby - 1075304   Historic England</a>	


List Entry Number	Name	Grade	National Heritage for England web page	Image
1298861	Canons Ashby, Gates and Gate Piers to Park	II	<a href="#">CANONS ASHBY, GATES AND GATEPIERS TO PARK, Canons Ashby - 1298861   Historic England</a>	
1367449	Canons Ashby House, Gates and Gate Piers to Green Court	II*	<a href="#">CANONS ASHBY HOUSE, GATES AND GATEPIERS TO GREEN COURT, Canons Ashby - 1367449   Historic England</a>	

List Entry Number	Name	Grade	National Heritage for England web page	Image
1075306	Canons Ashby House, Walls Running from Lion Gates to South to South East Corner of House	II	<a href="#">CANONS ASHBY HOUSE, WALLS RUNNING FROM LION GATES TO SOUTH TO SOUTH EAST CORNER OF HOUSE, Canons Ashby - 1075306   Historic England</a>	
1075305	Canons Ashby House, Walls Running from North West Corner of House to Green Court Gates	II	<a href="#">CANONS ASHBY HOUSE, GARDEN WALLS RUNNING FROM NORTH WEST CORNER OF HOUSE TO GREEN COURT GATES, Canons Ashby - 1075305   Historic England</a>	


List Entry Number	Name	Grade	National Heritage for England web page	Image
1187120	Canons Ashby House, South Lion Gates and Gate Piers to Garden	II*	<a href="#">CANONS ASHBY HOUSE, SOUTH LION GATES AND GATEPIERS TO GARDEN, Canons Ashby - 1187120   Historic England</a>	
1343564	Canons Ashby House, Garden Walls Running from South West Corner of House to Lion Gates to South including Gate and Piers	II	<a href="#">CANONS ASHBY HOUSE, GARDEN WALLS RUNNING FROM SOUTH WEST CORNER OF HOUSE TO LION GATES TO SOUTH, INCLUDING GATE AND GATEPIERS, Canons Ashby - 1343564   Historic England</a>	


List Entry Number	Name	Grade	National Heritage for England web page	Image
				
1054047	Canons Ashby House, Sundial on Middle Terrace of Garden	II	<a href="#">CANONS ASHBY HOUSE, SUNDIAL ON THE MIDDLE TERRACE OF GARDEN, Canons Ashby - 1054047   Historic England</a>	


List Entry Number	Name	Grade	National Heritage for England web page	Image
1343563	Canons Ashby House, Statue of Shepherd Boy in Green Court	II	<a href="#">CANONS ASHBY HOUSE, STATUE OF SHEPHERD BOY IN GREEN COURT, Canons Ashby - 1343563   Historic England</a>	 A photograph of a stone statue of a shepherd boy standing on a pedestal in a green courtyard. The statue is dressed in a long tunic and a hat, holding a staff. In the background, there is a large stone building with a tall, ornate spire and a gate.


List Entry Number	Name	Grade	National Heritage for England web page	Image
1343563	Canons Ashby Registered Park and Garden	II*	<a href="#">CANONS ASHBY HOUSE, STATUE OF SHEPHERD BOY IN GREEN COURT, Canons Ashby - 1343563   Historic England</a>	




List Entry Number	Name	Grade	National Heritage for England web page	Image
				

List Entry Number	Name	Grade	National Heritage for England web page	Image
1015534	Canons Ashby Scheduled Monument: the remains of a medieval monastery, castle settlement and fields, post-medieval houses, gardens and park, and series of five dams	-	<a href="#">Canons Ashby: the remains of a medieval monastery, castle, settlement and fields, post-medieval houses, gardens and park, and a series of five dams, Canons Ashby - 1015534   Historic England</a>	 <p data-bbox="1464 826 2069 898">16<sup>th</sup> century gardens (stew pond with Canons Walk earthwork in the background)</p> <p data-bbox="1464 927 1980 954">Moat earthwork south of Hill View Cottages</p>

List Entry Number	Name	Grade	National Heritage for England web page	Image
				<p data-bbox="1464 293 2116 363">Medieval settlement earthworks northwest of Preston Capes road</p> 

List Entry Number	Name	Grade	National Heritage for England web page	Image
				<p data-bbox="1464 293 1984 320">Earthwork of possible motte in the parkland</p>  <p data-bbox="1464 863 1951 890">Northern-most mill pond dam earthwork</p>

List Entry Number	Name	Grade	National Heritage for England web page	Image
1075308	Well House Approximately 250m N of the Church of St. Mary	II	<a href="#">WELL HOUSE APPROXIMATELY 250 METRES NORTH OF CHURCH OF ST MARY, Canons Ashby - 1075308   Historic England</a>	

List Entry Number	Name	Grade	National Heritage for England web page	Image
1075307	Church Cottage	II	<a href="#">CHURCH COTTAGE, Canons Ashby - 1075307   Historic England</a>	

List Entry Number	Name	Grade	National Heritage for England web page	Image
1187152	Church of St. Mary	I	<a href="#">CHURCH OF ST MARY, Canons Ashby - 1187152   Historic England</a>	